

Ryan Takes Center Stage

TAMPA, Florida (AP) — Congressman Paul Ryan, a hero to conservatives and lightning rod for Democrats, was taking center stage Wednesday night at the Republican National Convention, accepting the party's nomination to be Mitt Romney's vice presidential running mate in the campaign to defeat President Barack Obama. Ryan's nationally televised speech on the second day of the storm-shortened convention will be a debut of sorts for the 42-year-old from the Midwestern state of Wisconsin. Though a



Republican vice presidential candidate, Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis. gestures during a walk through ahead of his delivering a speech at the Republican National Convention, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012 in Tampa, Fla.

(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak) leader on budget policy in Congress, Ryan was not well-known outside Washington when tapped by Romney this month. The selection of Ryan, author of a plan to reduce the federal deficit, excited Republicans skeptical of Romney's commitment to conservative principles. Ryan also brought to the ticket youthful energy and a down-to-earth appeal lacking in the stiffer, more aristocratic Romney. But Democrats pounced on the nomination, saying Romney was now clearly wedded to Ryan's proposals to cut spending by revamping health care programs for the elderly and poor.

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Saints Come Marching In



Matt Landry of St. Bernard Parish carries Sharon Sylvia, who is diabetic, across the top of the Mississippi River levee as Isaac moves through New Orleans Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012. Jeff Sancho, far left, with the Air National Guard, carries Sylvia's medicines.

(AP Photo/The Times-Picayune, Chris Granger)

Isaac spares New Orleans on Katrina anniversary

Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Hurricane Isaac sidestepped New Orleans on Wednesday, sending the worst of its howling wind and heavy rain into a cluster of rural fishing villages that had few defenses against the slow-moving storm that could bring days of unending rain. Isaac arrived exactly seven years after the devastation Hurricane Katrina and passed slightly to the west of New Orleans, where the high winds and sheets of rain appeared to be no match for a levee system bolstered by \$14 billion in federal repairs and improvements after the catastrophic failures during Katrina. Isaac had top sustained winds of 70 mph (112 kph), just below the hurricane threshold of 74

mph (119 kph).

New Orleans' biggest problems seemed to be downed power lines, scattered tree limbs and minor

flooding. Just one person was reported killed, compared with 1,800 deaths from Katrina in Louisiana and Mississippi. And police

reported few problems with looting. Mayor Mitch Landrieu ordered a dusk-to-dawn curfew just to be sure.

The hurricane also canceled commemoration ceremonies Wednesday for Katrina's 1,800 dead in Louisiana and Mississippi. But in Plaquemines Parish, a sparsely populated area south of the city that is outside the federal levee system, dozens of stranded people were rescued by boat in flooded coastal areas. The storm pushed water over an 18-mile (28-kilometer) levee and put so much pressure on it that authorities planned to intentionally puncture the floodwall to relieve the strain.



Chuck Cropp, center, his son Piers, left, and wife Liz, right, wade through floodwaters from Hurricane Isaac Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012, in New Orleans. As Isaac made landfall, it was expected to dump as much as 20 inches of rain in several parts of Louisiana.

(AP Photo/David J. Phillip)

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Isaac spares New Orleans on Katrina anniversary

Continued from front

The storm knocked out power to as many as 700,000 people, stripped branches off trees and flattened fields of sugar cane so completely that they looked as if a tank had driven over them.

By midafternoon, Isaac had been downgraded to a tropical storm. Even at its strongest, it was far weaker than the 2005 hurricane that crippled the city. Because its coiled bands of rain and wind were advancing at only 5 mph (8 kph) — about the pace of a brisk walk — the threat of storm surges and flooding was expected to last into a second night as the immense comma-shaped system crawled across Louisiana.

Rescuers were waiting for the strong winds to die down before moving out to search for other people. After wind-driven water spilled over the levee in

Plaquemines Parish, state officials said they would cut a hole in it as soon as weather allowed and equipment

people in the area needed to be rescued.

Plaquemines Parish has also ordered a mandatory

affects about 3,000 people in the area, including a nursing home with 112 residents. Officials said the

area and levees might be overtopped.

"I think a lot of people were caught with their pants down," said Jerry Larpen-ter, sheriff in nearby Terrebonne Parish. "This storm was never predicted right since it entered the Gulf."

In New Orleans, Army Corps spokeswoman Rachel Rodi said the city's bigger, stronger levees were withstanding the assault.

"The system is performing as intended, as we expected," she said.

"We don't see any issues with the hurricane system at this point."

Police cars had been patrolling the nearly empty streets since Isaac began bringing fierce winds and heavy rains to the city Tuesday night. The curfew was set to start Wednesday night and would last until further notice.

The storm drew massive attention because of its timing — coinciding not only with the Katrina anniversary, but also the first major speeches of the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida.

Isaac also posed political challenges with echoes of those that followed Katrina, a reminder of how the storm became a symbol of government ineptitude.

President Barack Obama sought to demonstrate his ability to guide the nation through a natural disaster, and Republicans tried to reassure residents as they formally nominated former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney as their presidential candidate.

Obama, campaigning before a university crowd in Virginia, pledged that the government was "doing every single thing we need to do to make sure the folks down there are taken care of." Isaac came ashore late Tuesday as a Category 1 hurricane, with 80 mph (128 kph) winds near the mouth of the Mississippi River. It drove a wall of water nearly 11 feet (3.3 meters) high inland. In Vermilion Parish, a 36-year-old man died after falling 18 feet (5.5 meters) from a tree while helping friends move a vehicle ahead of the storm. □



Research students from the the University of Alabama measure wind speeds as Hurricane Isaac makes landfall, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012, in New Orleans, La. Isaac was packing 80 mph winds, making it a Category 1 hurricane.

(AP Photo/Eric Gay)

could be brought to the site.

Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal said as many as 40

evacuation for an area on the Mississippi River's west bank, worried about a storm surge. The order

evacuation was ordered out of concern that more storm surge from Isaac would be pushed into the

RNC shines spotlight on running mate Ryan

Continued from front

Ryan was expected to talk about his Irish immigrant ancestors and small-town values, offering a personal presentation of a lawmaker largely known for sober policy analysis. In excerpts released ahead of the speech, Ryan lauded Romney, saying the former Massachusetts governor "will not duck the tough issues" if he wins the White House. "After four years of getting the runaround, America needs a turnaround, and the man for the job is Governor Mitt Romney," he said. The speech comes at a gathering struggling for attention as Tropical Storm Isaac cast a pall from the nearby northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico. The storm had threatened Florida earlier in the week and prompted Republicans to postpone Monday's start of the convention.

So far, Ryan has not changed the dynamics of the presidential race. Polls continue to show Romney

and Obama in a statistical tie ahead of the November vote. The economy is the biggest issue in the race. While voters have more confidence in Romney on

about Ryan, whom they described as conservative, intelligent, fake and phony. Traditionally, vice presidential picks have little effect on U.S. presidential

her poor performance in subsequent interviews left the widespread impression she was unprepared for the vice presidency.

McCain spoke Wednesday ahead of Ryan. Without mentioning Obama by name, McCain accused the president of failing to lead on defense spending and on grave international issues as well. "Sadly, for the lonely voices of dissent in Syria and Iran and elsewhere who feel forgotten in their darkness ... our president is not being true to our values," he said.

Also speaking Wednesday was Condoleezza Rice, secretary of state under President George W. Bush. Rice's appearance and McCain's comments mark some of the few moments in which international affairs have received attention at the convention, where speakers have repeatedly bashed Obama for his handling of the economy, the growth in the federal deficit and his signature health care program. □



Republican vice presidential candidate, Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., and wife Janna appear on stage at the Wisconsin delegation's Beers and Brats event, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012, in Tampa, Fla. (AP Photo/Mary Altaffer)

economic matters, they like Obama better on a personal level.

A poll by the Pew Research Center and The Washington Post found Americans deeply divided

elections, though John McCain's selection of then-Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin jolted the race four years ago. Her electrifying speech was the highlight of the 2008 convention, but

Police:

100-year-old driver plows into 11 in LA

SHAYA MOHAJER

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A 100-year-old man backed his car on to a sidewalk and hit 11 people, including nine children, across from an elementary school in South Los Angeles just after classes had ended Wednesday, authorities said.

Four of the children were in critical condition when firefighters arrived but they were stabilized and were in serious condition at a hospital, city fire Capt. Jaime Moore said. Everyone was expected to survive, he said.

Some of the victims were trapped under the powder blue Cadillac before witnesses helped pull them out, Moore said. Helicopter footage from NBC4 showed a child in a pink T-shirt being loaded into

an ambulance and a Hello Kitty backpack lying in the street nearby.

Police identified the driver as Preston Carter and said he was being very cooperative.

Carter talked to television reporters just after the crash, saying he has a license and will be 101 years old Sept. 5.

"My brakes failed, it was out of control," Carter told KCAL-TV.

Asked about hitting the children, Preston said: "You know I'm sorry about that. I wouldn't do that for nothing on earth. My sympathies for them."

After an initial investigation, it appears Carter was pulling out of a parking space, but instead of backing into the street, he backed onto the sidewalk, police Capt. George Rodriguez said. The car hit a group of peo-



Preston Carter, 100, talks with police officers after police say his car went onto a sidewalk and plowed into a group of parents and children outside a South Los Angeles elementary school, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012, in Los Angeles. Nine children and two adults were injured in the wreck.

(AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill)

ple who were gathered to buy snacks from a street vendor, Rodriguez said.

"I think it was a miscalcula-

tion on his part, the gentleman is elderly," said Rodriguez, who added there is no age limit for having a

driver's license in California. "Obviously he is going to have some impairment on his decision making."

Older drivers have been involved in other tragedies. In 2003, an 86-year-old man mistakenly stepped on the gas pedal of his car instead of the brake and then panicked, plowing into an open-air market in Santa Monica.

Ten people were killed and 63 injured.

According to California's Department of Motor Vehicles, people over age 70 must renew their driver's license in person, rather than via the Internet or by mail. Older drivers can also be required to take a supplemental driving test if they fail a vision exam, or if a police officer, a physician, or a family member raises questions about their ability. □

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Fact Check:

RNC Convention speakers stray from reality

ANDREW TAYLOR
 RICARDO ZALDIVAR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sounding the keynote for his party's national convention, Chris Christie promised that GOP nominee Mitt Romney will lay out for the American people the painful budget cuts it'll take to wrestle the government's debt and deficit woes under control.

The combative New Jersey governor's hopeful words, however, flew into a headwind of reality: In nearly a year of campaigning, Romney has yet to detail how he would do that. Rob Portman, an Ohio senator and former U.S. trade representative, glossed over his own problems when critiquing President Barack Obama's trade dealings with China. And former senator and presidential candidate Rick Santorum stretched the truth in taking Obama to task over his administration supposedly waiving work requirements in the nation's landmark welfare-to-work law.

A closer look at some of the words spoken at the GOP convention in Tampa, Fla.:

CHRISTIE: "Mitt Romney will tell us the hard truths we need to hear to end the torrent of debt that is compromising our future and burying our economy... Tonight, our duty is to tell the American people the truth. Our problems are big and the solutions will not be



New Jersey Governor Chris Christie addresses the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Fla.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

painless. We all must share in the sacrifice. Any leader that tells us differently is simply not telling the truth."

THE FACTS: Romney has made a core promise to cut \$500 billion per year from the federal budget by 2016 to bring spending below 20 percent of the U.S. economy, and to balance it entirely by 2020.

His campaign manifesto, however, is almost completely devoid of the "hard truths" Christie promises. In fact, Romney is promising to reverse \$716 billion in Medicare savings achieved by Obama over the coming

decade and promises big increases in military spending as well, along with extending tax cuts for everyone, including the wealthiest. The few specifics Romney offers include repealing Obama's health care law, cutting federal payrolls, weaning Amtrak from subsidies, cutting foreign aid and curbing the Medicaid health care program for the poor and disabled. But it'll take a lot more than those steps for Romney to keep his vague promises, which are unrealistic if he's unwilling to touch Medicare and Social Security in the coming decade. Even

the controversial budget plan of his vice presidential nominee, Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., largely endorsed by Romney, leaves Medicare virtually untouched over the next 10 years.

What's left for Romney to cut is benefit programs other than Medicare and Social Security, which include food stamps, welfare, farm subsidies and retirement benefits for federal workers. The remaining pot of money includes the day-to-day budgets of domestic agencies, which have already borne cuts under last year's budget deal. There's also widespread congressional

aversion to cutting most of what remains on the chopping block, which includes health research, NASA, transportation, air traffic control, homeland security, education, food inspection, housing and heating subsidies for the poor, food aid for pregnant women, the FBI, grants to local governments, national parks, and veterans' health care.

PORTMAN: "Take trade with China. China manipulates its currency, giving it an unfair trade advantage. So why doesn't the president do something about it? I'll tell you one reason. President Obama could not run up his record trillion-dollar deficits if the Chinese didn't buy our bonds to finance them. Folks, we are beholden to China for bonds as we are to the Middle East for oil. This will end under Mitt Romney."

THE FACTS: Portman is an expert on commerce, having served as President George W. Bush's trade representative from May 2005 to May 2006. But he didn't fare particularly well in stemming China's trade advantage, either.

Under Portman's watch, the U.S. trade deficit with China soared by 25 percent in 2005, and the next year it climbed more than 15 percent. By contrast, the deficit rose 10 percent over the first three years of Obama's presidency, according to U.S. government figures. □



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Peterson son on stand: 'Dad is innocent'

MICHAEL TARM
Associated Press

JOLIET, Ill. (AP) — Drew Peterson's son stepped up Wednesday as the last witness before the defense rested, telling jurors in a calm, confident voice that he never for a second believed that his father killed his mother.

Shortly after the 19-year-old child of the former suburban Chicago police officer and his third wife, Kathleen Savio, testified, Drew Peterson stood in the Joliet courtroom to say he had decided not to take the stand.

Dressed in a suit and tie, Thomas Peterson, a Bolingbrook High School valedictorian last year and now a University of Pennsylvania student, smiled at jurors and seemed at ease as he repeatedly defended his father.

"I believe that my dad is innocent," he said firmly when a defense attorney asked why he was in court. Asked by defense attorney Joel Brodsky if he was there to support his father, he answered politely, "Yes, sir."

Drew Peterson, 58, has pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder in Savio's 2004 death, which was initially ruled an accident. Her death was reclassified a homicide only after his fourth wife, Stacy Peterson, disappeared in 2007.

Just before the defense rested, Judge Edward Burmila asked the former Bolingbrook police sergeant whether he would take the stand.

The next step will be for prosecutors to put on a rebuttal of the defense case, recalling some witnesses and possibly calling new ones. □

Official:

Lindh, other Muslim inmates show defiance

CHARLES WILSON
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) —

American Taliban fighter John Walker Lindh and other Muslims housed at a special federal prison unit in Indiana have used the veil of religion to show defiance toward their captors and assert power over other inmates, prison officials testified Wednesday.

Lindh is suing the government to overturn a policy preventing him and the other Muslim detainees he is housed with from performing their five daily prayers as a group.

He once delivered an incendiary sermon in Arabic at the Terre Haute prison's Communication Management Unit despite a requirement that inmates speak English except for ritual prayers, security official Tim Coleman testified during the third day of the trial over Lindh's lawsuit.

Lindh, who is serving a 20-year sentence for aiding the Taliban during the 2001 U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan, says group prayer is required under the school of Islam to which he adheres, and that the prison policy violates a 1993 law barring the government from curtailing religious speech without showing a compelling interest.

Coleman said Lindh has a history of acting defiantly toward prison officials.

"He's not recognizing our authority and is trying to put religion over our authority," Coleman said.

However, under cross-examination by legal director Ken Falk of the American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana, Coleman acknowledged that some of the incidents involving Lindh re-



Ken Falk, the legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana, talks about his client John Walker Lindh during a lunch break at the United States Court House in Indianapolis. Lindh, 31, a Muslim convert who was charged with supporting terrorists after he was captured by U.S. troops in Afghanistan and later pleaded guilty to lesser charges, claims his religious rights are being violated because the federal prison in Terre Haute deprives him of daily group prayer.

(AP Photo/Michael Conroy)

sulted from an interrupted visit with his mother, whom he hadn't seen in months, and his religious practices. He said the most serious punishment Lindh received was 30 days without email. Coleman said that Muslims, who form the majority of the inmates in the 55-cell unit, have been involved in group assaults and fights with non-Muslim inmates. He said about a dozen Muslim inmates surrounded him one time when he confronted one of their comrades about his behavior during the authorized weekly prayer, and non-Muslim inmates said they felt pres-

sured into signing a petition in favor of permitting daily group prayers.

Coleman acknowledged that non-Muslim inmates had broken many of the same regulations the Muslims had, such as fighting and failing to cooperate with daily head counts.

Allowing only Muslims to perform their daily rituals in a group would foster resentment among prisoners of other faiths, which could trigger violence and give those who profess Islam a dangerous sense of power, said Harvey Church, the associate warden who oversees the secretive, high-se-

curity unit.

"When someone is given more opportunities than others, then that is a significant sign of power," Church said. And when inmates think they have power, they start acting out against other inmates and prison staff, he added.

Currently, inmates are allowed only one weekly group service regardless of their religion, the prison officials said.

Under questioning by Falk, Church admitted he had never observed a Muslim group prayer, didn't know where Mecca was, and didn't understand Islamic rituals.

Lindh, 31, is one of 24 Muslims among the 43 inmates in his unit. Prisoners there are under open and covert audio and video surveillance, and all of their phone calls are monitored except for talks with their attorneys. Prisoners aren't allowed to touch family members during tightly controlled visits. Without such strong security, the government claims, inmates would be able to conspire with outsiders to commit terrorist or criminal acts.

According to court documents, additional group prayers are permitted for Muslims during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

The lawsuit was originally filed in 2009 by two Muslim inmates in the unit. Lindh joined the lawsuit in 2010, and the case has drawn far more attention since then. The other plaintiffs have dropped out as they were released from prison or transferred to other units. In 2001, Lindh was captured in Afghanistan by U.S. troops and accused of fighting for the Taliban. □



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Defendant in Texas rape case vanishes from trial

By JUAN A. LOZANO

Associated Press

LIBERTY, Texas (AP) — One of the men accused in a series of repeated sexual assaults of a young Texas girl disappeared from his trial Wednesday, following a day of emotional testimony from the now 13-year-old girl who cried as a video of one of the encounters was played for jurors.

Testimony continued despite the absence of 20-year-old defendant Eric McGowen, who is one of 14 adults accused of having sex with the girl during a nearly three-month span two years ago. Six juveniles were also charged.

Prosecutors and defense attorneys huddled briefly with Judge Mark Morefield in front of his bench when McGowen failed to return to the courtroom following an afternoon break. The judge then told jurors the



This undated booking photo provided by the Liberty County Sheriff's Department in Liberty, Texas, shows Eric McGowen. Opening statements were scheduled to begin Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012, in Liberty in a trial for McGowen, who is charged with aggravated sexual assault of an 11-year-old girl in 2010 in Cleveland, Texas. McGowen is among 14 adults charged in the case. He faces up to life in prison if convicted of aggravated sexual assault of a child.

(AP Photo)

trial would go on without him.

Morefield later said a bench warrant had been issued, and McGowen's bond was increased from \$35,000 to \$250,000. The judge de-

nied a defense motion for a continuance in the case and said the trial would resume Thursday morning.

"Your client left voluntarily," Morefield told defense attorney Matthew Poston.

Poston and prosecutors did not comment outside the courtroom because of a gag order in the case.

McGowen is charged with aggravated sexual assault of a child and faces up to life in prison if convicted.

The girl, testifying under a pseudonym, told jurors about two incidents, one in October 2010 and one the next month, in which McGowen and several other men and boys took turns having sex with her while recording the encounters on video.

The girl briefly broke down in tears as jurors were shown a few minutes of video of an alleged October 2010 sexual assault in a house in Cleveland, a small southeast Texas town where she and the defendants lived.

The girl, who was 11 at the time, said she was brought into what she described as the "baby room" in the house, and that McGowen

and others took turns having sex with her. She said the video, which several jurors turned away from, was of her being assaulted by another man charged in the case.

"Did the guys just take turns with you?" prosecutor Joe Warren asked.

The girl seemed calm for most of the roughly 1½ hours she testified. She mostly gave short answers to questions, often pausing to stare at the floor or ceiling of the Liberty courtroom before responding.

She described another alleged rape that November that started in a different Cleveland home and continued later at a nearby abandoned trailer.

Asked by Warren if more than 20 males might have assaulted her that day, the girl responded, "Probably." She also told jurors that McGowen used a beer bottle on her during that incident. Jurors were later shown police photos of used condoms and condom wrappers found inside and outside the house in the November incident.

Poston, questioned the girl for about six minutes, during which he asked whether she twice told police early in the investigation that she never had sex with McGowen. The girl said she didn't remember saying that. Prosecutors say the girl was assaulted on at least five occasions from mid-September through early December of 2010.

Eight of the 20 defendants accused in the case have pleaded guilty, including all six juveniles.

Authorities began investigating that December, after one of the girl's friends told a teacher he watched a cellphone video of her being raped in an abandoned trailer. □

Possible Eastern US ports strike looms

DAVID PORTER

Associated Press

NEWARK, New Jersey (AP) — A union representing dock workers at the U.S. East Coast's busiest port has authorized a strike if a contract deal isn't reached by the end of next month, lending urgency to preparations by retailers to send cargo elsewhere if labor talks affecting the entire seaborad remain at a standstill.

The negotiations affect ports up and down the East Coast and turn on key issues of overtime rules and container royalties, which are payments to union workers based on the weight of cargo received at each port. Talks broke down last week, and both sides said Wednesday no new discussions had been scheduled.

Some retailers had already put contingency plans into action and were rerouting ships to the U.S. West Coast or seeking other alternatives, while others were on the verge of acting,

according to Jonathan Gold, vice president of supply chain and customs policy for the National Retail Federation.

The Port of Los Angeles was prepared for the additional traffic, spokesman Phillip Sanfield said. Any rerouted ships likely won't arrive for a few weeks, he said.

A spokesman for Local 1804-1 of the International Longshoremen's Association confirmed the union's strike authorization vote was entered late Tuesday.

The local represents about 1,200 of the Port of New York and Jersey's 3,500 longshoremen and consists of maintenance and repair workers, spokesman James McNamara said. In 2011, the New York-New Jersey ports handled cargo valued at \$208 billion, up 18 percent over 2010, according to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

James Capo, head of the U.S. Mari-

time Alliance, which represents container carriers and port operators in the negotiations, has accused the union of taking advantage of loose overtime rules to make the New York-New Jersey ports the most expensive in the world. The alliance claims one-third of ILA workers there make more than \$200,000 per year, not counting bonuses.

Those bonuses include container royalties that were negotiated in the 1960s to protect workers from job losses due to automation but now serve as a guaranteed payment of more than \$15,000 annually for East Coast workers, the alliance contends.

McNamara accused the alliance of cherry-picking numbers and focusing only on a small minority of highly paid employees. He said the container royalties serve a valuable purpose by defraying benefits costs for union members in smaller ports, such as New Orleans and Jacksonville, Florida. □

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Assad acknowledges struggles in Syria's civil war

BASSEM MROUE
HAMZA HENDAWI
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — In a striking admission, President Bashar Assad said in an interview broadcast Wednesday that his armed forces will need time to defeat the rebels and addressed the string of defections from his authoritarian regime.

The comments amounted to an acknowledgment that even though the opposition lacks the government's tanks and airplanes, their tenacity and tactical creativity — combined with the military's struggle to fight on multiple fronts — have yielded a stalemate that could prolong the civil war with many more dead. Over the past few months, Syria's military has increasingly been stretched thin fighting on multiple fronts against rebels seeking to oust Assad. His forces have been unable to quell the rebellion as it spread to the capital, Damascus, with significant clashes that began in July and to Syria's largest city, Aleppo, a few weeks later. At the same time, the

military is fighting smaller scale battles in a string of other cities and towns around the country.

With neither side making significant advances, the conflict is looking more like a war of attrition that could be very drawn out.

"We are fighting a regional and global war, so time is needed to win it," Assad said in an interview with the pro-regime private TV station Dunya. "We are moving forward. The situation is practically better but it has not been decided yet. That takes time," he told the station, which is majority owned by Rami Makhlouf, a cousin of Assad and one of Syria's wealthiest men.

"If the armed forces wanted to use the entire range of its firepower, it can wipe out many areas. But this will be unacceptable," said Assad.

Assad also appeared to make light of the significant number of defections, some of them senior military and political officials, including the prime minister.



In this image made from video broadcast Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012 on Addounia TV, Syrian President Bashar Assad speaks at an unknown location. Assad said in a broadcast Wednesday that his regime needs more time to win the civil war, acknowledging that his forces are struggling to contain the rebel challenge.

(AP Photo)

"Defections are a positive process. Generally, it is self-cleansing of the state and the nation," said Assad. "If there is a Syrian citizen who knows of someone who wishes to flee but is hesitant to do so he should encourage him," he said with a smile. "Whoever flees is either weak or bad. A patriotic or a good person does not flee."

Assad claimed there were cases when authorities knew in advance of officials who wanted to flee and allowed them to do so unhindered. But he did not

provide any specifics to back up the claim.

Taken together with his comments to a visiting Iranian official over the weekend, Assad shows willingness for an even more prolonged conflict, even with more than 20,000 estimated dead in more than 17 months of fighting.

His regime, he told the senior Iranian official, would continue the fight against the rebels "whatever the price."

Some analysts saw the interview as a counter-attack by the regime to burnish its image in the face of recent military gains by the rebels.

Analysts and rights activists say the military has been unable to defeat the rebels in large part because of the tactics of its enemy — a rag-tag army of civilians-turned-fighters and defected soldiers without a clear chain of command. □

Egypt withdraws some Sinai tanks

ASHRAF SWEILAM
Associated Press

EL-ARISH, Egypt (AP) — Egypt on Wednesday withdrew some of the tanks it deployed near the Israeli and Gaza borders as part of a military operation against militants in the Sinai Peninsula.

The tank deployment earlier this month had brought complaints from Israel since

the peace treaty between the two countries bans such heavy weapons from a zone along the border. Israel had quietly agreed to Egypt sending thousands of troops into the area — also barred under the treaty — to fight militants, but it had not consented to the tanks.

Nearly a dozen tanks that had been stationed near

the Rafah border crossing into Gaza were seen heading out of northern Sinai on Wednesday afternoon. Military officials told The Associated Press they were returning to their base in Ismailiya, just on the other side of the Suez Canal from Sinai.

With the withdrawal, nearly 40 tanks remain in the border zone. □

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Draghi urges Germans to support euro rescue plan

DAVID McHUGH
AP Business Writer

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — European Central Bank head Mario Draghi urged skeptical Germans Wednesday to support his efforts to rescue the euro, arguing that “exceptional measures” could be used to restore stability across the 17-country single currency group. The ECB is hard at work on eagerly awaited plans for a bond-buying program aimed at lowering the borrowing costs of debt-ridden governments, including Spain and Italy. Draghi is expected to say more about the plans at the next ECB rate-setting meeting on Sept. 6.

The plans have sparked a fierce debate in Germany, which is the biggest backer of Europe’s financial rescue efforts. The country’s national central bank, the Bundesbank, and its head, Jens Weidmann, is against the bond-buying idea, along with many academic economists, conservative politicians and voters. They argue that it puts taxpayer money at risk and breaks the European Union treaty provision barring the ECB from directly

backing governments. Chancellor Angela Merkel has indicated she’s open to the ECB’s plans and has publicly admonished members of her governing coalition to tone down angry remarks about debt-stricken countries such as



German Chancellor Angela Merkel, left, welcomes Italy’s Prime Minister Mario Monti for talks about the European financial crisis, at the chancellery in Berlin, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012. European Central Bank head Mario Draghi urged skeptical Germans Wednesday to support his efforts to rescue the euro, arguing that “exceptional measures” could be used to restore stability across the 17-country single currency group.
(AP Photo/Markus Schreiber)

Greece. A top German official on the ECB executive board, Joerg Asmussen, has also publicly backed the bond purchase plans. In an opinion piece for highbrow German weekly Die Zeit, published on Wednesday, Draghi argues that as an exporter deeply integrated into the global and eurozone economies, Germany needs a strong, stable currency across the entire eurozone.

He said the bond purchases could lower interest rates that have been distorted by market panic. It would then be easier to spread the ECB’s currently low interest rates better throughout the eurozone. Setting rates for the currency union is its core mission, so purchases are in line with that, he argued.

“When markets are fragmented or influenced by irrational fears, our monetary policy signals do not reach citizens evenly across the euro area,” he wrote.

“We have to fix such blockages to ensure a single monetary policy and therefore price stability for all euro area citizens.”

France offers to pick up the tab for young hires

SARAH DiLORENZO
SYLVIE CORBET
Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The French government wants companies to hire young people so much that it’s offering to pick up the tab.

The new Socialist president, Francois Hollande, told his Cabinet Wednesday that he wants to wage a war on unemployment and unveiled a plan for the government to pay most of the salaries of tens of thousands of young people hired next year.

Unemployment in France is 10 percent, but nearly 23 percent for those under the age of 25. That’s an imbalance that many European countries are struggling with: In Spain, youth unemployment is over 52 percent; it’s 34 percent in Italy.

European employers are especially reluctant to hire young people because restrictive labor laws make it hard for companies to lay off employees. What’s more, in France, young people are typically required to do a series of often unpaid internships before landing a full-time

job or can only manage to get short-term contracts for years on end.

But few countries are approaching the problem in the way that France is. Italy and Spain have proposed modest tax breaks for companies that hire people just entering the workforce but have focused more on fundamental reforms of the labor market that they hope will address the root causes. Under France’s new plan, companies that hire a person between 16 and 25 for at least a year will only have to pay as little as 25 percent of the salary. The government hopes to create 100,000 of these “contracts for the future” next year and another 50,000 in 2014. It has promised to continue paying its share of the employee’s salary for three years.

The government will give preference to young people hired from poor urban or rural areas that have been hit hardest by rising unemployment. Certain sectors will also be favored, such as medicine and digital or green technology. Some economists were skeptical of the approach.

“Making the structures of the economy more competitive and better performing is what really has to drive the thinking (in countries such as Spain, Italy and Greece),” said Nicolas Veron, an economist affiliated with the Brussels-based think tank Bruegel and the Peterson Institute in Washington. “It’s not about targeted programs; it’s about the structure of the (labor) market.”

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Ukraine's highest court upholds Tymoshenko verdict

ANNA MELNICHUK
Associated Press
KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukraine's highest court on Wednesday upheld the conviction of former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko for abuse of office, a case that has strained the former Soviet state's ties with the West.

Tymoshenko was an architect of Ukraine's 2004 Orange Revolution that promoted democracy and unsuccessfully ran for president in 2010. She was sentenced to seven years in prison in October 2011, when she was found guilty of exceeding her powers while negotiating a gas contract with Russia while she was prime minister. The contract significantly increased the price Ukraine pays for Russian gas imports that are critical to the country. Her supporters say the trial

is a politically motivated attempt by her rival, President Viktor Yanukovich, to keep her out of October elections. The government denies the accusations. Russian President Vladimir Putin, Tymoshenko's counterpart in signing the gas deal, has said there was nothing illegal in her actions.

Judge Oleksandr Elfimov said the court had "found no grounds to uphold (Tymoshenko's) appeal" of the verdict, and that the prison term is "adequate to the gravity of the crime." Several members of the audience yelled "Shame!" upon hearing the verdict. Several Western nations have criticized the case against the ex-premier, along with the conviction and four-year prison sentence of Yuri Lutsenko, a former interior minister under Tymoshenko.

"Obviously, we are disappointed by the decision," U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said Wednesday. "We continue to urge the government of Ukraine to free Mrs. Tymoshenko and other members of the government and to restore their

full political and civil rights." The court hearing was attended by former Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski and former President of the European Parliament Patrick Cox. "This and past court rulings have nothing to do with justice," Tymoshenko aide

Oleksandr Turchinov said. Tymoshenko's daughter Eugenia described the hearing as a "shameful decision, which proves one more time that a dictatorship has come to Ukraine." Kiev-based political analyst Mykhailo Pogrebinsky said Wednesday's ruling "has brought Ukraine's legal system into a deadlock." "Criminal prosecution for a political decision can hardly be called the rule of law," he said.

Tymoshenko retains a strong following in Ukraine. At least 500 supporters gathered Wednesday outside the courthouse in Kiev, chanting "Freedom to Yulia!"

After the hearing, Tymoshenko's supporters held a mock funeral procession, carrying a small coffin with a figure of Themis, the Greek goddess of justice, inside. □



Supporters of former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko take part in a rally outside Ukraine's High Specialized Court on Civil and Criminal Cases in Kiev, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012. Ukraine's highest court on Wednesday upheld the guilty verdict against the country's ex-prime minister, who is in jail on abuse of office charges.
(AP Photo/Efrem Lukatsky)

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STEP UP REVOLUTION 3D SP PG-13
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matinee: 2:45

THE ODD LIFE OF TIMOTHY GREEN PG
daily: 5:00 2:30
matinee: 12:00

SPARKLE PG-13
daily: 4:45 2:15
matinee: 12:00

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daily: 7:30 9:45
matinee: 12:00

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High price tag for Japan's nuclear-free power grid

HIROKO TABUCHI

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TOKYO — As Japan moves to cut back on nuclear power after last year's disaster in Fukushima, it is running into a harsh economic reality: The cost of immediately abandoning its nuclear reactors may be too high for some big utilities to shoulder.

If the country's 50 nuclear reactors were permanently closed this year, power companies would be hit with losses totaling 4.4 trillion yen (\$55.9 billion) rendering at least four of them insolvent, according to calculations this summer by the government's Agency for Natural Resources and Energy.

The extraordinary costs of an immediate shutdown have emerged as a major concern for the Japanese government, which has struggled to balance the desire for improved nuclear safety with the bottom-line realities of the big utilities. Nuclear plants generated about one-third of Japan's electricity before the Fukushima accident, but most

remain at least temporarily offline.

"People talk easily about shutting down Japan's nuclear power plants, but the economic and financial consequences are severe," said Reiji Takeishi, professor in environmental economics at Tokyo Inter-

them would give the power companies until 2030 to shut their reactors permanently, allowing them to largely recoup their plant investments. By 2030 the majority of reactors would be older than 40 years, and would face decommissioning anyway under Japa-



The Hamaoka Nuclear Power Plant, shortly after it began shutting down one of its reactors, in Omaezaki, Japan. As Japan moves to cut back on nuclear power after the disaster last year in Fukushima, it is finding that removing a political liability could lead to a harsh economic reality, as power companies will be hit with losses totaling about \$55.9 billion.

(Ko Sasaki/The New York Times)

national University. The government is now considering at least three options to reduce the country's dependence on nuclear power — and all of

nese guidelines. But a series of fresh safety concerns, including possibly active fault lines beneath nuclear sites, have raised doubts about whether the nuclear reactors should be restarted at all. And the proposed 18-year timetable has angered the country's growing anti-nuclear movement, which complained that the government had its priorities wrong.

"How can you put the economy above safety, above human life?" Masanori Oda, a contemporary artist and a representative of the movement, said after a meeting with Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda last week.

One option being considered by the government would reduce the country's dependence on nuclear power to 20 to 25 percent of electrical needs by 2030. A second option would cut the segment to 15 percent, and a third would eliminate nuclear power entirely.

Though the 15 percent proposal had initially gained traction, public hearings and opinion polls have shown overwhelming support for a complete phase-out.

All of the proposals could

involve progressively re-starting the country's reactors.

In recent days, a string of governing party lawmakers and government ministers have also expressed support for the so-called zero option, with an eye on nationwide elections that could be called within months.

The fate of the nuclear reactors is part of a larger and highly charged discussion over the costs and benefits of nuclear energy, and its alternatives.

Much of the argument has tended to focus on the wider economic costs of turning away from nuclear power. Japan's biggest and most influential business lobby, the Keidanren, warns of disaster. Hundreds of thousands of jobs would be lost, the group says, and energy alternatives would be hampered by problems. Already Japan's fuel imports have surged since the Fukushima disaster, driving the country's trade deficit to record highs.

Though Japan has so far avoided blackouts this summer, power shortages are weighing on businesses. Japan's greenhouse gas emissions are also surging, and renewable energies such as wind and solar power remain small-scale, expensive and unreliable, the lobbying group says.

"If we do not have a stable supply of energy at economically viable prices, Japan's economy cannot grow," the group said earlier this month.

The economic stakes for the utilities could be even higher in the shorter term.

A government-appointed panel of experts warned this year that there is a possibly active fault line under the Shika Nuclear Power Plant, 170 miles north of Kyoto, raising the possibility that the location could be declared unfit for a nuclear facility. The plant's operator, the Hokuriku Electric Power Co., would be pushed to near-insolvency with losses of at least 313 billion yen (\$3.97 billion) if it were forced to shut the two reactors, the government calculations show. □

Mexico: Judge orders arrest of ex-governor

OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A Mexican judge has ordered the arrest of a former border state governor for allegedly fomenting drug trafficking, authorities said Wednesday.

Mexico's Attorney General Marisela Morales said she has asked Interpol for help in arresting Tomas Yarrington, who was governor of Tamaulipas state along the Texas border from 1999 to 2005. "Until now, we have no information on where he might be, but the order (for his arrest) is already in effect," she said. The Mexican charges follow allegations by U.S. prosecutors that Yarrington accepted millions of dollars in bribes from Gulf and Zetas drug cartels while in public office "and from various extortion or bribery schemes," and invested the money in Texas real estate.

Civil actions filed by U.S. authorities in May allege that Yarrington used various front men and businesses "to become a major real estate investor through various money laundering mechanisms," according to court documents filed in one of the cases, in Corpus Christi, Texas. The other forfeiture case was filed in San Antonio.

Joel Androphy, Yarrington's attorney in Houston, Texas, said Mexican authorities are going after his client for political reasons.

"This is nothing more than a pure political issue," Androphy said. "He has committed no crimes and the authorities know it, but for political reasons this is being brought."

Androphy said he is aware of the arrest warrant but had not discussed it with his client and said he did not know where Yarrington was. The former governor had been in Florida shortly before the first forfeiture cases were filed in the United States in May but government officials asked him to leave the country because his documentation had expired, he said. □

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Mexico:

2 CIA agents injured in shooting go to US

E. EDUARDO CASTILLO

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican officials said Wednesday that two Americans wounded in a shooting attack by federal police on a U.S. Embassy vehicle are employees of the Central Intelligence Agency, and acknowledged they have returned to the United States.

A Mexican federal official whose agency does not allow him to be quoted by name said the wounded Americans are CIA employees. U.S. officials wouldn't confirm which agency the men work for or say what work they were performing in Mexico.

On Tuesday, the Mexican navy issued a statement saying the Americans were visiting a training course being held in a rural, mountainous area south of Mexico City. Some local press had previously said the Americans were acting as trainers or instructors.

Mexican Attorney General Marisela Morales was asked Wednesday why the two Americans were allowed to return to the U.S. even though an investigation is under way. She said they were allowed to go "so that they can be treated in the place they think is safest."

Morales said they could testify later in the case of 12 federal police officers who allegedly shot at their vehicle Friday.

On Tuesday, President Felipe Calderon promised a "thorough investigation with all rigor and severity" would determine whether the shooting was a case of mistaken identity or a purposeful attack. □

Brazil expands anti-AIDS program

SAO PAULO (AP) — Brazil's anti-AIDS program will be expanded to include at least 35,000 more people, a Health Ministry official said Wednesday.

Ronaldo Hallal of the ministry's Sexually Transmitted Disease Department said people with 500 or fewer CD4 cells per cubic millimeter will receive anti-retroviral HIV treatment. Before the program's expansion, people with 350 or less CD4 cells per cubic millimeter received treatment. CD4 cell levels measure the strength of the immune system. Hallal said recent studies show that the "earlier treatment begins, the better is the quality of life of a person infected with the HIV virus."

"Brazil will be the only large country in the world to offer this kind of treatment that will reduce the risk of opportunistic infections like tuberculosis," Health Minister Alexandre Padilla said in a statement.

The expansion of the program will require spending an additional 120 million reais (\$60,000) a year, the Health Ministry said on its website.

Hallal said Brazil already spends 1.2 billion reais (\$600 million) each year in its free anti-AIDS program that is currently treating 223,000 people. He said he thinks there are 250,000 other Brazilians infected with the HIV virus but are unaware of it. □

Analysts:

Financial impacts after Venezuela blast

FABIOLA SANCHEZ

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— The deadly blast and fire at Venezuela's biggest refinery are prompting critics to question whether the state oil company has been neglecting maintenance while helping fund government programs under President Hugo Chavez.

Analysts say the disaster at the Amuay refinery could also mean a financial hit for

known as "missions." Its contributions to such programs rose from less than \$1.6 billion in 2004 to \$10.4 billion last year.

The government's pressure on the company to generate funds for programs that shore up Chavez's support has led to a "deterioration that PDVSA has had in its refining activities," said Asdrubal Oliveros, an economist and director of the consulting firm Ecoana-

"That is evidently going to generate bigger supply problems in the country than those that already exist," said oil expert Juan Carlos Sosa, who heads the Venezuelan consulting company Petroleo YV.

He said he expects the refinery shutdown will lead to increased fuel imports, meaning more government spending on fuel at international prices.

Sosa said rising imports of



The Amuay refinery is seen near Punto Fijo, Venezuela, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012. The deadly blast and fire at Venezuela's biggest refinery are prompting critics to question whether the state oil company has been neglecting maintenance while helping fund government programs under President Hugo Chavez.

(AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos)

state-run Petroleos de Venezuela SA by forcing it to further increase imports of fuel for domestic consumption. The refinery remained shut down Wednesday, a day after firefighters put out the last of the blazes that had raged in fuel tanks since the explosion early Saturday. Officials say the blast killed at least 41 people and injured more than 150.

In recent years, Chavez's government has increasingly used a share of earnings from the state oil company, known as PDVSA, to bankroll social programs

litica.

He said the state oil company has concentrated bigger investments in oil production to prevent output from slumping "but has neglected other activities, among them refining."

He and other oil industry experts say insufficient maintenance made disasters likelier. Government officials counter that PDVSA has invested \$6 billion in maintaining refineries during the past five years.

It remains unclear how much money the disaster may cost PDVSA.

gasoline and other refined fuels even before the disaster reflected problems at Venezuelan refineries that have prevented them from keeping up with demand. In the first half of this year, fuel imports by PDVSA reached \$4.9 billion, up 86 percent from the \$2.6 billion in imports during the same period last year, according to official figures.

That included 54,000 barrels of gasoline per day that Venezuela imported from the U.S. in April, the last month for which figures were available. □

Press freedom group: Venezuela's media is under assault

IAN JAMES

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela

(AP) — The Committee to Protect Journalists said in a new report Wednesday that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's government has used threats and a barrage of restrictive measures to gradually weaken the country's private news media.

The New York-based press freedom group said restrictions have come through harassment of critical journalists as well as fines and other measures to penalize coverage of sensitive subjects.

The group's report cited a \$2.2 million fine against TV channel Globovision for its coverage of a deadly prison uprising last year. It also condemned an injunction issued earlier this year calling for journalists to base reports about water contamination on hard

data, specifically requiring a "truthful technical report backed by a competent institution."

That measure came after reports in Venezuelan newspapers about complaints of contaminated drinking water, and after an oil spill that fouled the Guarapiche River in eastern Venezuela.

"The injunction on water reporting is only the latest addition to a minefield of legislative changes and presidential decrees put forth by Chavez's administration to restrict the independent media," CPJ said in its report. "Through its massive state media presence and its use of censorship, legal harassment, and administrative sanctions, the Chavez government sets clear limits on public dissent."

The group said such measures have led to censorship and a dearth of in-

depth coverage about some key issues ahead of Venezuela's Oct. 7 presidential election. It also said access to information that should be public has increasingly been restricted, and that journalists from critical Venezuelan news organizations such as Globovision often are excluded from news conferences.

There was no immediate reaction from the Venezuelan government to the report. Chavez has repeatedly said that the government respects press freedom, while also strongly criticizing private media that he says campaign against him.

Chavez on Tuesday accused his opponents of using the media for political purposes to take advantage of last weekend's deadly refinery explosion, which killed dozens and set off debate about safety measures within the oil industry. □

Argentine president Fernandez wants to challenge Hollywood

MICHAEL WARREN

Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina

(AP) — Argentina's leader unveiled an ambitious plan Wednesday to support the country's television and film creators with a new industrial park along the Buenos Aires waterfront that she hopes will be modeled on Hollywood's studios. President Cristina Fernandez decreed the creation of a public-private company leveraging state pension funds to attract private developers and turn an abandoned industrial area near the city's glitzy Puerto Madero district into a business incubator known as the "Polo Audiovisual," or audiovisual center. "Just like they do it in Hollywood, where support for the industry has made it possible for its content to become almost universal, we want our values and culture in Argentina to have this kind of development," she said.



Argentina's President Cristina Fernandez, right, and Deputy Economy Minister Axel Kicillof applaud during a ceremony at the government house in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012. Fernandez unveiled an ambitious new plan to support the country's television and film creators with a new industrial park along the capital's waterfront that she hopes will be modeled on Hollywood's studios.

(AP Photo/Natasha Pisarenko)

Argentina's "El Secreto de Sus Ojos" won the best foreign film Oscar in 2010, but the vast majority of movies Argentines see are still made in America. Fernandez has sought to change

that by requiring at least a minimum amount of televised content to be home-grown, and by subsidizing a content boom on state-run television that has fostered thousands of jobs. □

Mexico announces new deep-water oil discovery

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican President Felipe Calderon says the country's state-owned oil company has made its first large-scale discovery of deep-water oil deposits in the Gulf of Mexico. Calderon says Pemex drilled a roughly three-mile (5,000-meter) exploratory well and now hopes to verify the existence of 250 million to 400 million barrels of light oil in the area known as Perdido. The field is about 24 miles (39 kilometers) from U.S. waters. Calderon says a deposit of that size would be equal to a third of Pemex's annual petroleum production. The president made the announcement to reporters Wednesday. □

2 killed as police battle with Peru coca growers

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Two civilians in Peru have died of apparent gunshot wounds in a clash between police and coca growers trying to halt coca crop eradication in the Upper Huallaga valley region.

The men were killed Tuesday near Monzon. That's a coca-growing area that authorities say is governed by drug gangs where authorities have never attempted eradication. A police statement Wednesday says officers fired tear gas and shots in the air after at least 800 coca growers from Monzon confronted eradication workers. Peruvian drug czar Carmen Masias says Monzon is among the last major redoubts of cocaine-trafficking in Peru. U.S. officials say Peru surpassed Colombia this year in potential cocaine production. □

Chile police probed for making protesters strip

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Chile's police director says four officers will be disciplined for forcing student protesters to strip naked. Gen. Gustavo Gonzalez told reporters before testifying to the Senate on Wednesday that 10 arrested students were forced to take their clothes off, including a minor girl and boy. They had been arrested for occupying their school in Rancagua, south of Santiago. The incident happened shortly after other students threw chairs at police and forced them to flee a school in the capital. Gonzalez says the penalties he'll apply to the station commander, a major and two lower-level officers range from a formal warning to several days of arrest. He refused to identify the officers before testifying to the Senate's human rights commission. □

Authorities bust cocaine lab in remote Honduras

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — Honduran authorities announced Wednesday that the National Police have busted a rare, makeshift cocaine laboratory hidden in a remote, mountainous region near the Atlantic coast as part of their U.S.-backed anti-drug efforts in Central America. Honduran Minister of Public Safety Ivan Mejia said a six-month investigation led agents Tuesday to the lab, where they found 500 kilograms of cocaine and the paste used to make cocaine. Mejia said authorities also seized barrels containing toxic chemicals used to make the drug, including hydrogen peroxide, potassium permanganate and activated carbon. □



At The Alhambra Casino:

A Red Carpet Gala Dinner Introduces New Banqueting & Events Ballroom

Eagle Beach – The Quota Club under the direction of President Gladys N. Kock organized a red carpet gala dinner at the new ballroom, just recently finished on the second floor of the Alhambra Casino. The space trapped above the gaming floor, was transformed into a stylishly decorated ballroom with a seating capacity of 250 people theater-style.

For dinner banquets the room may be set up for 180 party-goers, and in the event that a dance floor is required, the room may accommodate up to 140 guests, around elegant round tables, for formal plated functions. The unique Quota Food &

Wine Pairing was catered by a talented culinary team under the leadership of Executive Chef Paul Zijlstra, of Windows on Aruba. Other members of the team included French-born Executive Chef Gerard Coste, who was recently recruited to oversee and execute all functions at the new ballroom. Sous Chef Patrick Lampe working for Divi Mega Resorts also assisted the preparation of the five star tasting menu, nicely contributing to the amazing creativity of the chefs. Quota Club members and their guests enjoyed a six course gourmet experience paired with wines from Romar Trading and Pepia Est.



Wine artist Clive Faustin provided the wine notes and shared the microphone and the commentaries with Herdy Ten Lohuis, describing the much-enjoyed Riesling, Chardonnay, Pino Noire and Dessert Wine, poured that night.

The evening took off with a champagne reception at Fusion, Piano & Wine Bar then guests walked the red carpet to the elevator leading to the second floor ballroom for an unforgettable dinner. The menu featured a sinful Pate de Foie Gras and dried fruit appetizer, then continued with an exotic Grilled Sea Bass with mango sauce. A champagne intermezzo in the ballroom foyer, refreshed the palates of party-goers and allowed the refresh of tables just before the main course, a Veal Rib



Eye Steak with delicate morel mushrooms followed by delectable cheese nibbles and a Grand Petit Dessert. Jos Valentijn, the Food & Beverage Manager oversaw the excellent table service.

Pictured here the New Banqueting & Events Ballroom which is now open for business above the Alhambra Casino. The space may be

used in conjunction with Fusion Piano & Wine Bar and with Ginger, the popular New Asian restaurant. With ample, easily accessible parking and a complete shopping mall, Alhambra can now host conventions and meetings offering guests a diverse array of events, from simple BBQs on the open air patio to elaborate celebratory affairs. □

At The Casino at the Radisson:

Osmar Croes Wins the Camouflage Poker Tournament



The Casino at the Radisson hosted an exciting poker tournament with a total of seventy-two participants, just recently. The card players, most of them Dutch, young and handsome, spent a wonderful time making bets, nibbling on Dutch snacks and sipping

premium cocktails. While more than \$5,000 were guaranteed in cash prizes, at the end of the tournament a total of \$ 8,250 were awarded to winners, as well as handsome trophies.

The Camouflage Poker Tournament will return in

September, when another tournament will be played allowing Osmar Croes, Lai-ka Werleman and Roque Aparicio to defend their titles as top winners, under the glittering stars of the Casino at the Radisson ceiling, reports Poker Room Manager, Susy Zievinger. □



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on the
Beach

Dani
Velikonja

Today's Beauty on the Beach is Dani Velikonja, visiting all the way from Salzburg, Austria!, This is her first time on Aruba, and she is very much enjoying her stay at the beautiful Manchebo Beach Resort.

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We encourage you to spend an evening with the locals, and enjoy a taste of our culture at the Carubbian Festival. It's also a great family or group activity!

Package includes:

- Round-trip transportation from your hotel
- Entrance to the festival
- Dinner and beverages
- Entertainment – Carnival show, live music, and more
- A commemorative carnival mask

Price : \$64 per person.
\$32 children 12 years and under.

Where : Main-Street San Nicolas

When : Thursdays from 6 pm to 10 pm

Information: visit your guest services desk in your hotel for more information and tickets.

The Carubbian Festival is an initiative of the Ministry of Tourism, Transportation and Labour. Operated by the Carubbian Foundation.

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The Carubbian Festival invites you to a taste of Aruba, San Nicolas Style! Every week the Carubbian Festival offers guests hours of Carnival-Style entertainment featuring lively performances with hot Caribbean flavor!

Performing Thursday night this week on the Main Stage is "CLIMAXX", Dance Groups "THE SUPER DANCERS", "MA-SIDURI", "CARNA ARUBA" will get your body moving – as will "MIQUEL PHILLIPS" when he performs the Limbo; on the CMB Plaza "BITO & THE BOYS" will delight with their steel drums; and on the Main Street the party will surely get into the groove with "NOS CULTURA" and the "OBS BRASSBAND"! Don't miss this truly tropical experience at the Carubbian Festival: Thursday Night! □



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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

WNBA Roundup



San Antonio Silver Stars guard Danielle Robinson (13) makes a pass against Minnesota Lynx forward Rebekkah Brunson (32) and guard Candice Wiggins (11) in the first half of a WNBA basketball game, Tuesday, Aug. 28, 2012, in Minneapolis.

Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Roneeka Hodges scored 20 points and Temeka Johnson had 17 as the Tulsa Shock beat the short-handed Atlanta Dream 84-80 on Tuesday to snap a 13-game road losing streak.

The Dream played without guard Angel McCoughtry, who was suspended indefinitely before the game by new coach and general manager Fred Williams for breaking an unspecified team rule. McCoughtry is the WNBA's leading scorer and helped the U.S. women win the gold medal at the London Olympics.

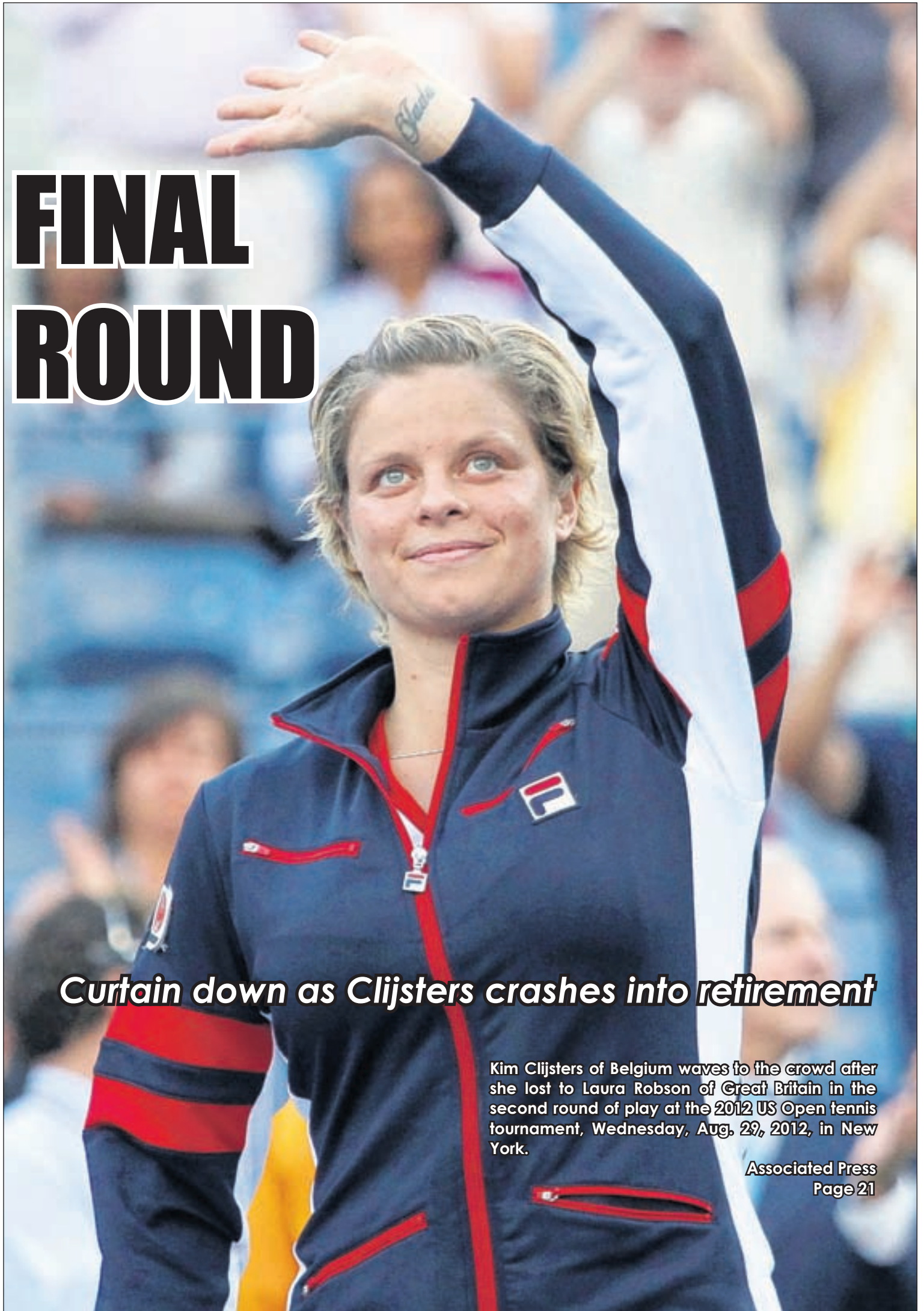
Erika de Souza scored 16 points and Sancho Lyttle had 14 for Atlanta (12-13), which has lost two straight and three of five.

The Shock (5-19) announced earlier in the day it will be without Elizabeth Cambage for the rest of the season after the No. 2 overall pick in last year's WNBA draft decided not to play due to fatigue.

Ivory Latta scored 14 points and Glory Johnson finished with 10 for Shock.

Continued on Page 20

FINAL ROUND



Curtain down as Clijsters crashes into retirement

Kim Clijsters of Belgium waves to the crowd after she lost to Laura Robson of Great Britain in the second round of play at the 2012 US Open tennis tournament, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012, in New York.

Associated Press
Page 21

Armstrong says he's 7-time Tour de France champion

MONTREAL (AP) — Lance Armstrong introduced himself as a seven-time Tour de France champion at a cancer conference on Wednesday.

"My name is Lance Armstrong. I am a cancer survivor," he said to open his speech to the World Cancer Congress. "I'm a father of five. And yes, I won the Tour de France seven times." Armstrong announced last week he would no longer challenge the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency's drug charges against him. USADA threw out his competitive victories dating to 1998, which would include all seven Tour wins. Armstrong, who has maintained his innocence, focused on his experience as a cancer survivor and the work of his charitable foundation. He said he struggled to get enough information following his diagnosis in 1996. "After I left the doctor's office, I was grabbing every pamphlet and flyer I could off the wall," he said. "You know what we did after that? We went to the bookstore — remember those things." Arm-



Lance Armstrong speaks to delegates at the World Cancer Congress in Montreal Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012. Associated Press

strong also announced his foundation would donate an additional \$500,000 to a joint initiative aimed at increasing access to cancer care around the world.

Armstrong briefly returned to the doping scandal at the end of his remarks, vowing it wouldn't impact his charitable work.

"I think the real issue here is one of distraction," he said. "I'm going to tell this to you all as if you're friends and partners and allies. I'm not going to be distracted from this fight." Later, hundreds of people joined Armstrong on an hour-long training run up Mount Royal. The runners cheered and tried to pose for photos with Armstrong when he arrived at a park. □

NFL to use replacement officials for Week 1

BARRY WILNER

AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The National Football League will open the regular season with replacement officials. League executive Ray Anderson has told the 32 teams that negotiations

remain at a standstill between the NFL and the officials' union. The replacements will be on the field beginning next Wednesday night when the Cowboys visit the Giants to open the season.

The NFL Referees Associa-



This Aug. 11, 2012 file photo shows replacement officials taking the field at the start of an NFL football preseason game between the Seattle Seahawks and the Tennessee Titans, in Seattle.

Associated Press

tion was locked out in early June and talks on a new collective bargaining agreement were unproductive. Replacements have been used throughout the pre-

season, with mixed results. In 2001, the NFL used replacements for the first week of the regular season before a contract was finalized. □

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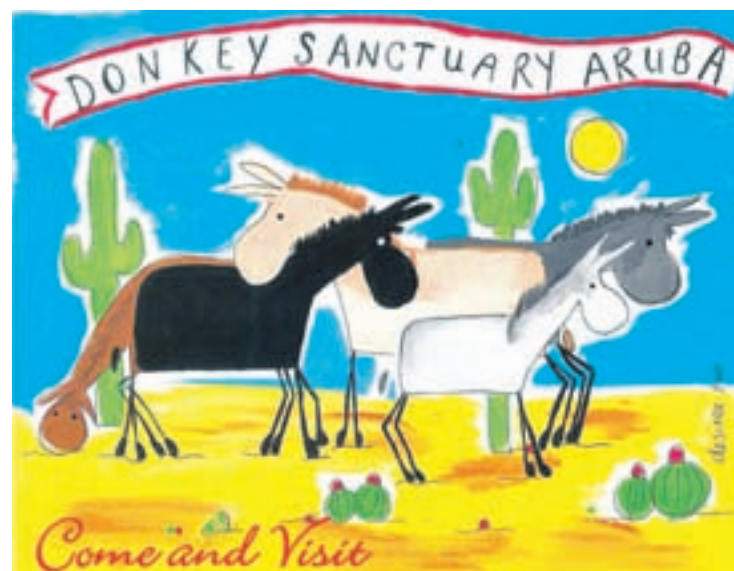
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NL Capsules

Pirates down Cardinals, close on wild card

The Associated Press
PITTSBURGH (AP) — Pedro Alvarez homered twice and drove in four runs, James McDonald scattered two hits over seven innings and the Pittsburgh Pirates beat the St. Louis Cardinals 9-0 on Tuesday night.

Alvarez hit a two-run homer in the third to give the Pirates a comfortable lead, added an RBI double in the fourth and then hit a 469-foot drive to center in the sixth. He went 4 for 5 as Pittsburgh drew within two games of the Cardinals in the race for the NL's second wild-card spot.

McDonald (12-6) gave up two hits, walked one and struck out six to beat Jake Westbrook (13-10) for the second time in two weeks. The Cardinals played most of the game without catcher Yadier Molina, who sustained neck, back and shoulder injuries in a violent collision at home plate with Josh Harrison.

MARLINS 9, NATIONALS 0
MIAMI (AP) — Stephen Strasburg gave up a career-high seven runs in five innings and first-place Washington's losing streak reached five games when the Nationals were beaten by Ricky Nolasco and last-place Miami.

Nolasco (10-12) allowed five hits in his third career shutout and eighth complete game.

Strasburg (15-6) came into the game with a streak of 27 consecutive scoreless innings against Miami in five starts since last September. But he gave up a homer to his second batter, Justin Ruggiano, and trailed 5-0 by the third inning.

Strasburg, who had won his past four starts, allowed five earned runs, gave up nine hits and struck out only three. He leads the NL with 186 strikeouts.

The youngster is expected to make perhaps four more starts before the Nationals

shut him down for the year to protect his surgically repaired elbow.

The Nationals began the night with baseball's best record, but they're saddled with a losing streak that matches their season high. REDS 5, DIAMONDBACKS 2
PHOENIX (AP) — Johnny Cueto scattered four hits over seven innings for his major league-leading 17th win and Cincinnati beat the slumping Arizona Diamondbacks.

Cueto (17-4) gave up two runs, struck out one and walked five for his eighth victory in nine decisions. The right-hander lowered his NL-leading ERA to 2.48.

Ryan Hanigan hit a two-run single and Todd Frazier added a two-run triple for the Reds, who won for the third time in four games and stretched their lead in the NL Central to seven games over St. Louis.

Jonathan Broxton pitched the eighth and Aroldis



Pittsburgh Pirates' Josh Harrison (5) collides with St. Louis Cardinals catcher Yadier Molina on a play at the plate in the second inning of the baseball game on Tuesday, Aug. 28, 2012, in Pittsburgh. Harrison was out, but Molina had to leave the game.

Associated Press

Chapman closed it out for his 33rd save and 25th straight, tied with Texas reliever Joe Nathan for the longest active streak in the majors.

Wade Miley (14-9) allowed three runs over seven innings for the Diamond-

backs, who have lost five straight and seven of nine.

BRAVES 2, PADRES 0
SAN DIEGO (AP) — Kris Medlen extended his scoreless streak to 28 1-3 innings for Atlanta by holding San Diego to five singles over eight innings. □

AL Capsules

Swisher has RBI for Yankees in 2-1 win over Toronto Blue Jays

NEW YORK (AP) — Phil Hughes had another fine start at home, Nick Swisher extended his torrid streak with an RBI single and New York handed Ricky Romero his 11th straight loss Tuesday night with a 2-1 victory over Toronto.

Hughes (13-11) won his sixth consecutive decision at Yankee Stadium, giving up only Adeiny Hechavarria's first major league homer in seven innings. He allowed four hits and walked three. Rafael Soriano bounced

back from a blown save Monday night, when he gave up a go-ahead homer to Colby Rasmus with two outs in the ninth, by working a perfect inning to finish the four-hitter for his 34th save in 37 tries.

Curtis Granderson hit a sacrifice fly to help the Yankees to their fifth win in 12 games. They beat Romero (8-12) for the third time during his winless skid.

The left-hander has not won in 12 starts since June 22. The Blue Jays have pro-

vided little help, though, giving him just 17 runs of support in his last 10 starts.

ORIOLES 6, WHITE SOX 0
BALTIMORE (AP) — Chris Tillman allowed one hit over seven innings and Nick Markakis drove in three runs as Baltimore defeated Chris Sale and Chicago for its fourth straight win.

Lew Ford homered for the second time in two nights and Adam Jones hit his 100th career home run for the Orioles, who moved a season-high 14 games over



Toronto Blue Jays starting pitcher Ricky Romero throws against the New York Yankees in the second inning of a baseball game on Tuesday, Aug., 28, 2012, in New York.

Associated Press

.500 (71-57) and remained atop the AL wild-card standings.

The only hit against Tillman (7-2) was an infield dribbler

by Dayan Viciedo in the fifth inning that shortstop J.J. Hardy couldn't snag with an attempted bare-handed pickup. □



Swedish rider Fredrik Kessiakoff celebrates on the podium after winning the 11th stage time trial in Pontevedra, Spain Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012. The 21-stage, three week race ends in Madrid on Sept. 9.

Associated Press

Kessiakoff wins Vuelta leg 11

PONTEVEDRA, Spain (AP) — Joaquin Rodriguez clung to the Spanish Vuelta's red jersey as overall leader ahead of Alberto Contador after finishing seventh in Wednesday's time trial, won by Swedish rider Fredrik Kessiakoff. Kessiakoff won the 24.5-mile 11th stage individual sprint by 17 seconds over Contador. Christopher Froome finished 39 seconds behind the Astana cyclist's winning time of 52 minutes, 36 seconds for third. The Tour de France runner-up is 15 seconds behind Rodriguez in third overall. SaxoBank rider Contador moved ahead of Froome into second in the overall standings but couldn't overtake Rodriguez after the leader finished 1:16 behind Kessiakoff to retain a one-second lead over 2008 champion Contador. "To have Alberto second is like having the devil in your ear," Rodriguez said. "My legs felt like they were going to explode (today)." Contador's fresher state may help his push for a second Vuelta title after he arrived at the 67th edition of the classic with little racing because of a doping ban since February. The Spanish cyclist gained

time over his rivals in the climb to Monte Castrove after 14 miles, and was also fastest among his top rivals in negotiating the steep and curvy descent, with Froome showing nerves navigating the thin stretch of road on the descent from that peak. "It's good to have been stronger than Chris Froome in a discipline that favors him, so while I managed a good time against the other favorites I wanted to win the stage," said Contador, who is racing in his first major event since serving a ban that stripped him of his third Tour de France title in 2010. "The Vuelta really starts now." But Rodriguez clung to the red shirt with a gutsy ride that suggests he had shaken off his runner-up disappointment at the Giro d'Italia, where the Katusha rider was undone by a poor time trial on the final day, which he started as leader ahead of eventual winner Ryder Hesjedal. "I just have to take it day-by-day now," Rodriguez said. "I can't have a bad day. It can get complicated here on out." Alejandro Valverde was fourth, 1:08 back, to sit 58 seconds back of Rodriguez. □

Bolt targets 2016 Rio games; 2013 plans unclear



Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt speaks during a press conference in Glattbrugg near Zurich, Switzerland, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012. Bolt will compete during the Weltklasse Zurich Diamond League athletics meeting on Thursday, Aug. 30, 2012.

Associated Press.

GRAHAM DUNBAR

AP Sports Writer

ZURICH (AP) — Triple Olympic champion Usain Bolt has a clear focus on the next Summer Games. His plans for the 2013 season? They're not so clear. Bolt said Wednesday that he's looking forward to the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics, though has yet to decide which events he will compete in at the world championship season next year. "If I can go to Rio and really defend all my titles, that would make it even greater," Bolt said ahead of the Weltklasse Diamond League meeting on Thursday. With just two races remain-

ing this season — the 200 meters in Zurich and a 100 in Brussels next week — his future plans have attracted more attention. Bolt has revived his old flirtation with adding the long jump to his usual program of 100 and 200 meters and 4x100 relay in Jamaica colors at the 2013 world championships in Moscow or beyond. The strategy of track and field's biggest and most marketable star will be discussed soon with coach Glen Mills. "I will be saying long jump, he'll probably be saying 400 meters," said Bolt, who has traditionally dismissed thoughts of training for the one-lap event. "I'm not

sure what I'm going to do next season. We have to work all that out first." Bolt said his options included focusing on lowering his world record times — 9.58 in the 100 and 19.19 in the 200 — or adding more titles and gold medals. "You never know what we might come up with. 'Let's try to run under 19 seconds, let's try to run 9.4, 9.3,'" he suggested, before adding that he judged himself by performing at major events. "When you have world records it's kind of hard to focus solely on trying to go faster," said Bolt, while acknowledging that is exactly what fans want to see. He intends lining up at Moscow next August, "without a doubt," though insisted he does not know in which events. Still, the 200 is his favorite event and he will surely want to regain the 100 world title he ceded to training partner Yohan Blake after being disqualified from the final for a false start last year. Bolt responded without obvious enthusiasm to a question about competing at the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland. He also missed the last Commonwealths held in New Delhi, and much of that 2010 season appeared designed to avoid burning out midway between summer Olympics. □

WNBA Roundup

Continued from Page 17

MINNESOTA 96, SAN ANTONIO 84, OT

At Minneapolis, Lindsey Whalen scored five of Minnesota's 10 consecutive points to start the overtime period as the Lynx avoided a rare home loss. Taj McWilliams-Franklin scored a season-high 19 points and set a WNBA record by recording her 1,050th offensive rebound in the second period. Rebekkah Brunson set a franchise record and a career

high with 20 rebounds to go with 17 points as Western Conference-leading Minnesota pushed the third-place Silver Stars three games back in the standings. Whalen scored eight of her 15 points in overtime, Seimone Augustus chipped in 19 and Maya Moore scored 14 as the Lynx (20-4) improved to 12-1 at home. Sophia Young and Jia Perkins led San Antonio with 19 points each, while Becky Hammon added 13 and Danielle Robinson scored 10. **SUN 83, SKY 72** At Rosemont, Illinois, Tina

Charles had 24 points and 14 rebounds to help the Sun open a four-game road trip with a victory. Charles earned her 13th double-double of the season as the Eastern Conference-leading Sun (18-6) improved to 9-2 on the road. Kara Larson had 18 points and Renee Montgomery added 15. Reserve Courtney Vandersloot scored 17 points to lead five Chicago players in double figures. Swin Cash added 15 points, and Carolyn Swords, Epiphanny Prince and Sonja Petrovic each had 10 for the Sky (9-15). □

Clijsters says goodbye with 2nd-round loss at U.S. Open

HOWARD FENDRICH

AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Kim Clijsters' singles career ended where she wanted it to, just not the way she hoped.

The four-time Grand Slam champion lost 7-6 (4), 7-6 (5) to 18-year-old Laura Robson of Britain in the second round of the U.S. Open on Wednesday, and will head into retirement after she finishes playing in doubles at Flushing Meadows. Clijsters walked away from the sport once before, in May 2007, then returned after a 2 1/2-year hiatus. But now 29 and a mother, the Belgian insisted this season that she means it this time, and decided the U.S. Open — and its hard courts that she conquered on the way to three championships — would be her final tournament.

"It's the place that has inspired me so much to do well and to do great things. It's hard to explain sometimes why," Clijsters said in an on-court interview, her face flushed and her eyes welling with tears.

"This completely feels like the perfect place to retire," Clijsters told the spectators at Arthur Ashe Stadium, many of whom rose to shower her with a standing ovation. "I just wish it wasn't today."

The loss Wednesday ended Clijsters' 22-match winning streak in New York, encompassing titles in 2005, 2009 and 2010, plus Monday's first-round victory.

She missed the hard-court major in 2004, 2006-08 and last year, thanks to a combination of injuries and the time she took off while starting a family. Her daughter, Jada, was born in February 2008. By August 2009, Clijsters was back on tour; unseeded and unranked, because she only played in two previous tournaments during her comeback, she won that year's U.S. Open. "Since I retired the first time, it's been a great adventure for my team and my family," said Clijsters, who was 28-0 against players ranked outside the top 10 at the

U.S. Open before Wednesday. "It's all been worth it. But I do look forward to the next part of my life coming up."

Her previous defeat at Flushing Meadows came against Belgian rival Justine Henin on Sept. 6, 2003, in the tournament final. Robson was 9 at the time.

This did have the feel, in some ways, of a changing of the guard.

Ranked 89th, and with only one prior victory over a top-25 player, Robson has been viewed — particularly back home in Britain — as an up-and-coming player whose smooth left-handed strokes would carry her far.

But she had never produced the kind of grit and court-covering athleticism that carried her past the 23rd-seeded Clijsters. And until now, Robson never had won more than one match in a Grand Slam tournament; her claim to fame had been teaming for a silver medal in mixed doubles at the London Olympics with Andy Murray, who was to play his second-round U.S. Open match Wednesday night.

Robson knows, though, how much Clijsters means to the game, not only as a superb player but as someone who by all accounts is universally liked — by fans, tennis officials and even opponents. When the contest ended with Clijsters sailing a backhand return long, allowing Robson to convert her third match point, they met at the net. Clijsters began to extend her arm for the customary handshake, and Robson pulled her in for a hug.

"I want to thank Kim," Robson told the crowd moments later, "for being such a great role model to me for so many years."

Less than an hour later, Clijsters was hanging out in the players' garden alongside the stadium. She shared a laugh with some friends, hugs from others, and paused to pose for a photograph alongside 14-time major champion Serena Williams, who was headed

out after partnering sister Venus for a first-round victory in doubles.

Clijsters was the only seeded woman who lost during the afternoon session of Day 3, when the winners included No. 1 Victoria Azarenka, defending champion Sam Stosur, 2011 Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova and 2011 French Open champion Li Na.

Joining Robson with a surprise victory was American wild-card entry Mallory Burdette, the NCAA runner-up who reached the third round in her Grand Slam debut by eliminating 69th-ranked Lucie Hradecka 6-2, 6-4.

Until recently, Burdette planned to take premed courses as a senior at Stanford in pursuit of a career in psychiatry.

"It's been a crazy ride," the 252nd-ranked Burdette said.

Could get even wilder: She next faces the winner of Wednesday night's match between four-time major champion Maria Sharapova and 78th-ranked Lourdes Dominguez Lino of Spain. Earlier on Ashe, the highest-ranked American man, John Isner, let out a big exhale of relief while waving to the crowd after getting past an argumentative Xavier Malisse 6-3, 7-6 (5), 5-7, 7-6 (9) in the first round. "I know in the nitty-gritty times of a match, I always have that confidence and all those wins in my back pocket," said Isner, who is 37-13 in tiebreakers this season.

The 6-foot-9 Isner hit 20 aces and ended things with a service winner on his third match point. That came after Malisse pushed an easy backhand volley into the net, then grabbed the ball and shoved it in his mouth and chomped on it as though it were an apple. The 57th-ranked Malisse, a 2002 Wimbledon semifinalist, was louder and angrier during a few exchanges with the chair umpire and even members of the crowd, earning a warning for profanity. □



Kim Clijsters of Belgium returns a shot against Laura Robson of Great Britain in the second round of play at the 2012 US Open tennis tournament, Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012, in New York.

Associated Press

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Mon - Thurs 4:10 / 6:25 / 8:45
Fri 4:10 / 6:25 / 8:45 / 11:05
Sat 1:55 / 4:10 / 6:25 / 8:45 / 11:05
Sun & Hol 1:55 / 4:10 / 6:25 / 8:45

Sylvester Stallone Jason Statham

THE EXPENDABLES 2

R
Mon - Thurs 4:50 / 7:15 / 9:35
Fri 4:50 / 7:15 / 9:35 / 11:55
Sat 2:25 / 4:50 / 7:15 / 9:35 / 11:55
Sun & Hol 2:25 / 4:50 / 7:15 / 9:35

Kathryn McCormick Ryan Guzman

STEP UP REVOLUTION

3D Version with Spanish Subtitles **PG-13**
Mon - Thurs 4:45 / 7:05 / 9:25
Fri 4:45 / 7:05 / 9:25 / 11:45
Sat 2:30 / 4:45 / 7:05 / 9:25 / 11:45
Sun & Hol 2:30 / 4:45 / 7:05 / 9:25

Meryl Streep Tommy Lee Jones

Hope Springs

PG-13
Mon - Thurs 9:10
Fri - Sat 9:10 / 11:15
Sun & Hol 9:10

Kodi Smit-McPhee Tucker Albrizzi

PARANORMAN

3D VERSION **PG**
Mon - Fri, 4:45 / 7:00
Sat, Sun & Hol 2:35 / 4:45 / 7:00

Jeremy Renner Rachel Weisz

THE BOURNE LEGACY

With Spanish Subtitles **PG-13**
Mon - Fri 6:20 / 9:10
Sat - Sun & Hol 3:30 / 6:20 / 9:10

STARTING NEXT WEEK SEPTEMBER 6 THE APPARITION

Personal Health:

Changing America's anthem on exercise

JANE E. BRODY

© 2012 New York Times

What would it take to persuade you to exercise?

A desire to lose weight or improve your figure? To keep heart disease, cancer or diabetes at bay? To lower your blood pressure or cholesterol? To protect your bones? To live to a healthy old age?

You'd think any of those reasons would be sufficient to get Americans exercising, but scores of studies have shown otherwise. It seems that public health experts, doctors and exercise devotees in the media — like me — have been using ineffective tactics to entice sedentary people to become, and remain, physically active.

For decades, people have been bombarded with messages that regular exercise is necessary to lose weight, prevent serious disease and foster healthy aging. And yes, most people say they value these goals. Yet a vast majority of Americans — two-thirds of whom are overweight or obese — have thus far failed to swallow the "exercise pill."

Now research by psychologists strongly suggests it's

time to stop thinking of future health, weight loss and body image as motivators. Instead, these experts recommend a strategy marketers use to sell products: portray physical activity as a way to enhance current well-being and happiness.

"We need to make exercise relevant to people's daily lives," Michelle L. Segar, a research investigator at the Institute for Research on Women and Gender at the University of Michigan, said in an interview. "Everyone's schedule is packed with nonstop to-do's. We can only fit in what's essential."

REFRAMING THE MESSAGE

Segar is among those who believe that people will not

commit to exercise if they see its benefits as distant or theoretical.

"It has to be portrayed as a compelling behavior that can benefit us today," she said.

"People who say they exercise for its benefits to quality of life exercise more over the course of a year than those who say they value exercise for its health benefits."

Her idea for a public service advertisement to promote exercise for working women with families: A woman is shown walking around the block after dinner with her children and says, "This is great. I can fit in fitness, spend quality time with my kids, and at the same time

teach them how important exercise is."

Based on studies of what motivates people to adopt and sustain physical activity, Segar is urging that experts stop framing moderate exercise as a medical prescription that requires 150 minutes of aerobic effort each week.

Instead, public health officials must begin to address "the emotional hooks that make it essential for people to fit it into their hectic lives."

"Immediate rewards are more motivating than distant ones," she added. "Feeling happy and less stressed is more motivating than not getting heart disease or cancer, maybe, someday in the future."

In a study of 252 office workers, David K. Ingledew and David Markland, psychologists at the University of Wales, found that while many began to exercise as a way to lose weight and improve their appearance, these motivations did not keep them exercising in the long term. "The well-being and enjoyment benefits of exercise should be emphasized," the researchers concluded. □



To get people to exercise more, experts are recommending a strategy marketers use to sell products: portray physical activity as a way to enhance current well-being and happiness.

(Yvetta Fedorova/The New York Times)

Officials: 1,700 park visitors risk rodent disease

TRACIE CONE

Associated Press

FRESNO, Calif. (AP) — The rustic tent cabins of Yosemite National Park — a favorite among families looking to rough it in one of the nation's most majestic settings — have become the scene of a public health crisis after two visitors died from a rodent-borne disease following overnight stays. On Tuesday, park officials sent letters and emails to 1,700 visitors who stayed in some of the dwellings in June, July and August, warning them that they may have been exposed to the disease that also caused two other people to fall ill. Those four people contracted hantavirus pulmonary syndrome after spending time in one of the 91 "Signature Tent Cabins" at Curry Village around the same time in June.

The illness is spread by contact with rodent feces, urine and saliva, or by inhaling exposed airborne particles. After the first death, the park sanitized the cabins and alerted the public through the media that the cause might have been diseased mice in the park. □

CDC:

West Nile virus cases spike 40% within 1 week

MARILYNN MARCHIONE

Associated Press

West Nile virus cases are up 40 percent since last week and may rival the record years of 2002 and 2003, federal health officials said Wednesday.

So far this year, 1,590 cases of the mosquito-borne disease have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and 66 deaths.

About half of the cases are serious illnesses, and the CDC considers those the best indicator of West Nile activity because many mild cases do not get reported and their symptoms may not even be recognized. Typical symptoms are fever, headache and body

aches, and most people get better on their own in a few days. Less than 1 percent develops neurological symptoms such as stiff necks and even coma and paralysis.

Based on reports of West Nile so far this year, "we think the numbers may come close" to those of 2002 and 2003, when nearly 3,000 severe illnesses and more than 260 deaths occurred each year, said the CDC's top expert on the disease, Dr. Lyle Petersen. Health officials think that West Nile activity will peak in mid-to-late August, but likely will continue through October. Because symptoms can take two weeks to appear, reporting cases

lags behind when people became infected.

The disease first appeared in the United States in 1999. Officials say this year's early spring and hot summer

may have contributed to the current boom in cases. Mosquitoes get the virus from feeding on infected birds and then spread the virus to people they bite.



Mosquitos are sorted at the Dallas County mosquito lab in Dallas. West Nile virus cases are up 40 percent since last week and may rival the record years of 2002 and 2003, federal health officials said Wednesday.

(AP Photo/LM Otero)

All states except Alaska and Hawaii have found West Nile virus in people, birds or mosquitoes this year.

Texas has been the hardest hit, accounting for half of the cases reported to the CDC so far.

"I'm not convinced that we have peaked. We may have plateaued," said Dr. David Lakey, commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services.

The CDC also says it does not expect Hurricane Isaac to have much of an impact on cases in Southern states. Heavy storms can wash out mosquito breeding grounds, although standing water can aid breeding, Petersen said. □



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IBM introduces new powerful computers

ARMONK, New York (AP) — IBM on Tuesday introduced a new line of mainframe computers the company calls its most powerful and technologically advanced ever. IBM said its zEnterprise EC12 mainframe server is designed to help clients securely and quickly sift through massive amounts of data, meeting the demands of retail and other clients in the age of "Big Data." Running at 5.5 GHz, IBM said the microprocessor that powers the mainframe is the fastest chip in the world. Processing speed is 25 percent faster than the previous model.

Mainframes are used by corporate clients ranging from banks to chain stores. IBM says the new model could be used by retailers to manage online transactions and analyze clients' buying habits and then use the information to create a "more customized shopping experience," such as a custom coupon issued during a transaction.

"Whether its retail or whether its transportation, making reservations, whatever it is, the system has been built really to help clients do those new types of new-age transactions," said Doug Brown, an IBM vice president of marketing.

IBM says more than \$1 billion was spent on research and development for the system at 18 sites worldwide, with most of it in Poughkeepsie, about 40 miles north of its headquarters in Armonk in Westchester County.

The new mainframe is being promoted as one of the most secure systems ever with a tamper-resistant cryptographic co-processor to provide privacy for sensitive transactions. IBM has been focusing on its software and services divisions, which are more profitable than selling the mainframe computers that made the company famous decades ago. But the sales of those mainframes help feed demand for IBM services. □

Sony to sell ultra-HD '4K' TV set in U.S. stores

PETER SVENSSON

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — High-definition TVs roughly quadrupled the resolution of the sets that came before them. Now, the industry is poised to do it again.

By December, U.S. stores will sell a TV set with four times the resolution of today's best HDTVs, Sony Corp. said Wednesday. The set will measure 84 inches on the diagonal, making the screen area four times as large as the common 42-inch set.

Executives said Sony will reveal the price of the set next week.

There is, for now, very little video content available that can take advantage of the higher resolution. With some work and know-how, a computer connected to the set can display video in the ultra-HD "4K" resolution. The set will also do its best to "upscale" TV,



This undated image provided by Sony shows an ultra-HD '4K' TV set. High-definition TVs roughly quadrupled the resolution of the sets that came before them. Associated Press

DVD and Blu-ray movies, so they look better.

Phil Molyneux, chief operating officer of Sony Electronics, said the situation was no different from the launch of the cassette

tape, the CD or the DVD.

"We always get this question when we launch beautiful new technology: Where's the content?" Molyneux told journalists at an event in New York. "Did we bring the content to market? Yes, we did."

The exact resolution of the set is 3,840 by 2,160 pixels. It's known as "4K" because it has nearly 4,000 pixels on the horizontal edge. That compares with 1,920 by 1,080 pixels in "1080p" sets. More pixels allow TV makers to make bigger screens without compromising sharpness. Sony makes digital projectors operating at 4K resolution for movie theaters. The TV industry has been looking for a technology that will get consumers to upgrade their HDTV sets. Sales are slumping after an initial wave of upgrades from standard-definition sets, and 3-D sets attract only a small number of consumers. □

Samsung reveals new Galaxy Note II

PETER SVENSSON

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Fresh off a legal battle with Apple, Samsung is announcing a new version of the Galaxy Note, an offbeat, oversized smartphone that's become a surprise hit.

Samsung, the world's largest maker of phones, is revealing the Galaxy Note II at a trade show in Berlin. The 5.5-inch screen is narrower but longer than on the first version. The processor is faster, and the software has been further adapted for the included stylus — the phone's signature feature. While Apple has been releasing a new smartphone

model each year, Samsung makes several to target different types of customers. That includes low-end phones for price-conscious customers. As a result, Samsung has been selling more smartphones than Apple this year.

The Note runs on Google's Android operating system but isn't among the phones that Apple is asking a judge to ban from the U.S., after a jury in California ruled last week that some of Samsung's Android phones violated Apple patents. The jury awarded Apple \$1 billion in damages in a high-profile case that could force Samsung and other

Android phone makers to rethink their designs.

The Note is designed to work well with a stylus for jotting notes and drawing on a screen, while styluses for other devices tend to be an afterthought. The Note's large screen also makes the phone more like a tablet and more suitable for playing games and consuming content. Samsung started selling a tablet version of the Note this month.

Samsung Electronics Co. says it has shipped 10 million first-generation Galaxy Note smartphone in one year.

Samsung says the new phone will go on sale in Eu-



This undated image provided by Samsung shows the Galaxy Note II. Associated Press

rope and Asia in October. It did not say when it would launch with a U.S. carrier. □

Stocks move sideways; US growth revised higher

MATTHEW CRAFT

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Slightly better economic growth and stronger housing sales nudged the stock market higher Wednesday. The Dow Jones industrial average managed a four-point gain.

The U.S. economy expanded at a 1.7 percent annual rate from April through June thanks to rising consumer spending and exports. That's an improvement from the initial estimate of 1.5 percent, but not enough to put a dent in the unemployment rate.

The National Association of Realtors said its index of sales for previously owned homes increased 2.4 percent in July, reaching its highest level since April 2010, the last month buyers could qualify for a federal tax credit.

"It's a mixed message overall," said JJ Kinahan, chief derivatives strategist at TD Ameritrade. "We all know we need 2 percent (economic) growth. And you can't continue to improve on housing if the unemploy-

ment picture doesn't improve. At some point, the numbers have to match."

The Dow added 4.49 points to close at 13,107.48.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index added 1.19 points to 1,410.49, while the Nasdaq

composite index gained 4.05 points to 3,081.19.

Crude oil lost 84 cents to finish at \$95.49. Hurricane Isaac made landfall Tuesday night, but its heavy winds and rain aren't expected to cause extensive damage to oil production and refinery operations in the Gulf of Mexico.

Markets have slipped into a late-summer lull. Indexes have barely budged amid some of thinnest trading days this year. After three days of minuscule moves, the S&P 500 index is down less than one point for the week.

Just over 10 billion shares have been traded on the New York Stock Exchange over the past four sessions, the slowest stretch since the last four days of 2011. One measure of stock-market volatility, the Vix, recently sank to a five-

year low.

Kinahan said the market's apparent lack of direction makes sense, especially ahead of the Labor Day weekend and a highly anticipated speech by Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke on Friday.

"There's no incentive to take a big trading position," he said. "Many people I know plan on taking a three-day weekend or are just coming in for the speech to see if (Bernanke) says anything interesting or market-moving. If not, they're outta there."

Among companies making news:

— WellPoint, the second-largest health insurance company in the United States, jumped \$4.41, or 8 percent, to \$61.80 after its CEO resigned. Investors had been frustrated with Angela Braly because of disappointing results.

— H.J. Heinz posted a 14 percent jump in quarterly net income, driven by higher prices and emerging-market sales, but revenue fell and missed Wall Street expectations. Heinz stock dropped \$1.29, or 2 percent, to \$56.12.

— The clothing store chain Jos. A. Bank posted stronger sales and revenue than Wall Street expected, and its stock soared \$5.81, or 14 percent, to \$47.44.

— Sealed Air Corp., a food packaging company, jumped 12 percent, the S&P 500's biggest gain. □



Specialist Stephen D'Agostino works at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Slightly better economic growth and stronger housing sales nudged the stock market higher Wednesday. The Dow Jones industrial average managed a four-point gain.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

Scotiabank to buy ING Bank of Canada

ROB GILLIES

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — The Bank of Nova Scotia said Wednesday it will buy ING Bank of Canada from its Dutch parent for \$3.1 billion. Toronto-based Scotiabank, one of Canada's five largest banks, said ING's portfolio will help Scotia solidify its No. 3 position in Canadian deposits.

ING Groep NV, one of Europe's largest financial insti-

tutions, has been revamping its business since it was bailed out by the Dutch state during the 2008 financial crisis. It said the deal will help sharpen its focus on core businesses and strengthen its balance sheet.

The division, called ING Direct Canada, offers savings, checking, mutual fund and mortgage products through telephone representatives and online ac-

cess. ING said the division has about 1.8 million customers in Canada.

It announced earlier this summer that it was putting its Canadian division under review for a potential sale. Last year, Capital One agreed to buy ING's U.S. online banking unit for \$9 billion in a cash and stock deal.

ING will continue to operate direct banking businesses in Australia, Austria,

France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

ING expects to record a gain of \$1.38 billion on the Canadian sale.

Scotiabank announced a public offering of 29 million common shares at \$52 Canadian (US\$52.55) to fund the acquisition. Shares of The Bank of Nova Scotia declined 2.8 percent, or \$1.51, to \$52.65 in afterhours trading on the New York Stock Exchange. □

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Yelp shares surge, insiders hold stock

MICHAEL LIEDTKE,
Associated Press
SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Yelp's early backers apparently still have a high opinion of the online business review service, much to Wall Street's relief, after insiders at several other Internet companies dumped some of their shares at the first opportunity.

A Wednesday increase of more than 22 percent in Yelp's stock price signaled the company's major shareholders are holding on to their stakes instead of seizing on a chance to reap the gains that have accumulated from investments made before the 8-year-old service went public in early March.

The first selling window for Yelp's insiders opened Wednesday with the expiration of a rule requiring them to hold on to their stock for 180 days after the company completed its initial public offering.

The end of other post-IPO "lock-up" agreements hammered the stocks of Internet social networking leader Facebook Inc. and Yelp rival Angie's List Inc. earlier this month. Their stocks plunged because some of their early backers pared their holdings, raising questions about whether the insiders had lost faith in the companies' long-term prospects. The biggest concerns hovered around Facebook after its first outside investor, former Internet executive-turned-financier Peter Thiel, sold about 20 million shares to get rid of most of his stake in the company.

A similar insider exodus at online coupon service Groupon Inc. and Web game maker Zynga Inc. has contributed to steep declines in their stock prices. Fears that Yelp Inc. would suffer a similar fate had driven down its stock by about 30 percent in the three weeks leading up to the unshackling of its lock-ups.

Yelp shares initially sank Wednesday, but then surged once it became apparent its insiders weren't fleeing en masse. □

Ford breaks ground on plant in eastern China

DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Auto Writer
HANGZHOU, China (AP)

— Ford Motor Co. is developing a lower-priced small car for the Chinese market but has no plans to start a separate, cheaper brand in China as rivals General Motors and Volkswagen have. Ford executives discussed their plans during a three-day tour that ended Wednesday at the groundbreaking of a new assembly plant in the eastern city of Hangzhou. The \$760 million plant, which is Ford's first plant on the populous east coast of China, is expected

to open in 2015.

"Hangzhou is really critical because of the market it serves, and it diversifies our operations," CEO Alan Mulally said after shoveling some dirt in a ceremony with local officials. He said the city has good infrastructure and a trained workforce that will help Ford expand. Ford won't say what it plans to build there, but Ford China CEO Dave Shoch confirmed this week that a new small car similar to the Chevrolet Sail will be among the eight vehicles Ford is bringing to China by 2015.

Ford's growth in China has been stymied by two things: It has just seven vehicles on sale here, compared with 30 for GM, and those it sells are relatively expensive. The Sail starts at around \$10,000. Ford's cheapest offering right now, the subcompact Ford Fiesta, starts at \$13,316.

"I think Ford cars are safe. The material they use is good and thick, not like the Japanese cars. But the price is pretty expensive," said Su Xiaoling, 31, a sales manager at a real estate company in Shanghai.

Ford executives hope to

start changing that perception next year, with the launch of the lower-priced EcoSport and Kuga small SUVs. The new small car will go on sale sometime in the next three years.

"We do recognize that we have been playing at the higher end," Shoch said.

Ford Asia Pacific chief Joe Hinrichs says the company learned a lot from the development of the Figo, a \$6,800 subcompact it sells in India. But Ford won't sell the Figo, which is smaller than the Fiesta, in China, Hinrichs said, in part because it's a right-hand drive car.

US economy grew at 1.7% rate in Q2

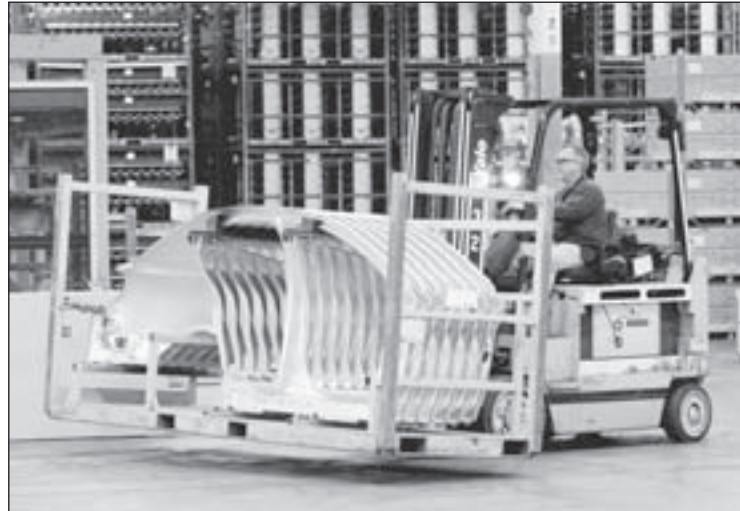
MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Economics Writer
WASHINGTON (AP)

— The U.S. economy grew at a tepid 1.7 percent annual rate in the April-June quarter, suggesting growth will stay weak in the second half of the year.

Slightly stronger consumer spending and greater exports were the main reasons the Commerce Department reported Wednesday that growth was better than its initial estimate of 1.5 percent.

Still, growth has slowed from the 2 percent annual rate in the January-March quarter and the 4.1 percent rate in the fourth quarter of 2011.

Economists expect only modest improvement in the second half of the year.



A worker at the Ford Stamping Plant moves a stack of Lincoln MKS body sides in Chicago Heights, Ill. The U.S. economy grew at a 1.7 percent annual rate in the April-June 2012 quarter, boosted by slightly stronger consumer spending and greater imports.

(AP Photo/Charles Rex Arbogast)

Most believe the economy will keep growing, but at a subpar rate of around 2 percent.

"The economy was sluggish in the second quarter and

the slight upward revision ... does nothing to change that picture," said John Ryding, an economist at RDQ Economics, in a note to clients.

A weak economy and high unemployment could hurt President Barack Obama re-election chances in November and bolster Republican challenger Mitt Romney's campaign.

Republicans are in Tampa, Florida, this week to formally nominate Romney and have pointed to the dismal growth in making the case to elect their candidate.

The report was the government's second look at gross domestic product for the second quarter. GDP measures the country's total output of goods and services, from the purchase of restaurant meals to construction of highways and bridges.

A third and final estimate of second-quarter growth will be released next month. □

Citigroup agrees to pay \$590M in shareholder suit

NEW YORK (AP) — Citigroup has agreed to pay \$590 million to settle legal claims by shareholders that its executives lied about the bank's growing problems before the financial crisis. The bank denied the allegations Wednesday, but said it agreed to the deal to eliminate the cost and uncertainty of litigating the class-action suit. Plaintiffs say Citigroup executives kept mum between February 2007 and April 2008 about huge losses the bank faced on complex mortgage investments. When the problem was disclosed, they say, Citigroup's share price plunged. They blame the bank for their losses.

The case, filed in late 2007, was one

of the first major lawsuits related to the toxic investments that fueled the financial crisis in 2008. It's also among the biggest proposed settlements of any crisis-related case.

In a statement, the bank said it is "pleased to put this matter behind us." It called the proposed settlement "a significant step" toward resolving the reams of litigation it faces as a result of the financial crisis.

Citigroup was one of the banks hit hardest by the crisis. As it faltered in the fall of 2008, the government made stronger banks take multibillion dollar bailouts in part to mask Citi's weakness. Citi took direct bailouts totaling \$45 billion and relied heavily

on other emergency programs from the Federal Reserve. It has repaid the money with interest.

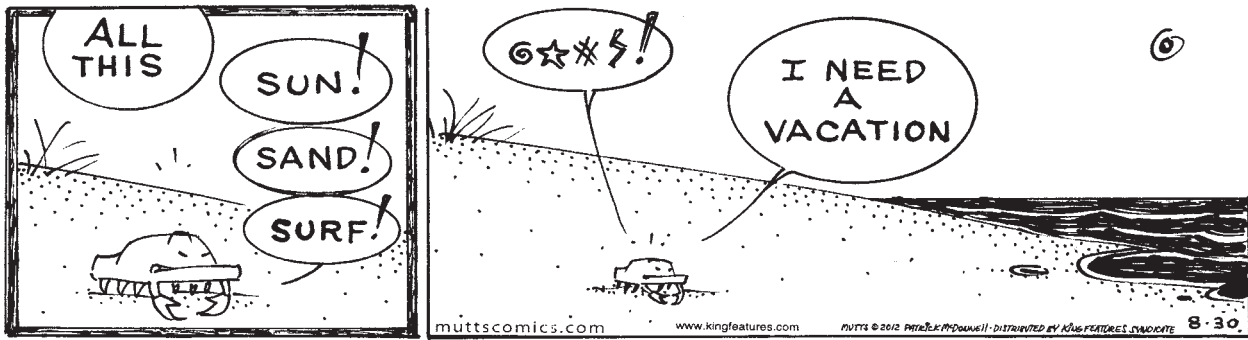
The bank said in its statement that it is "a fundamentally different company today than at the beginning of the financial crisis," having overhauled its risk management, reduced its risky investments and sold off non-core businesses.

Citigroup said it already has set aside enough money to cover the cost of the settlement.

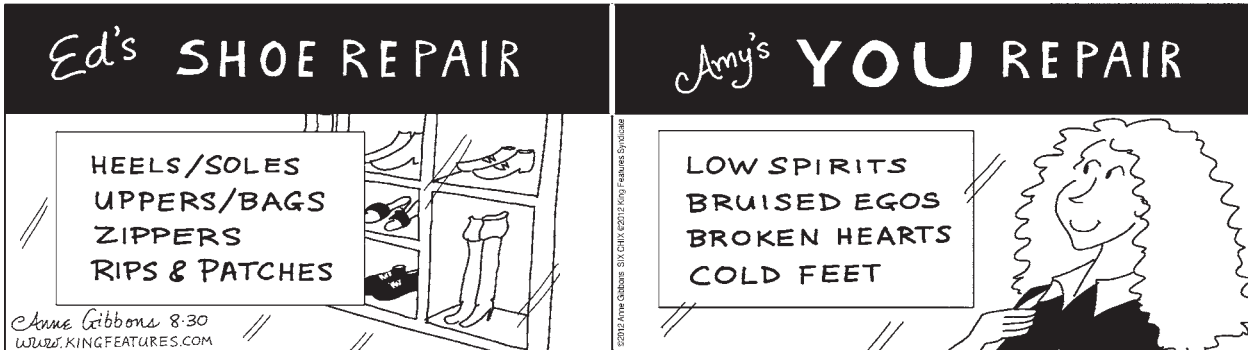
The settlement is subject to court approval by U.S. district judge Hon. Sidney Stein in Manhattan.

Citigroup rose 35 cents to \$29.69 in afternoon trading. □

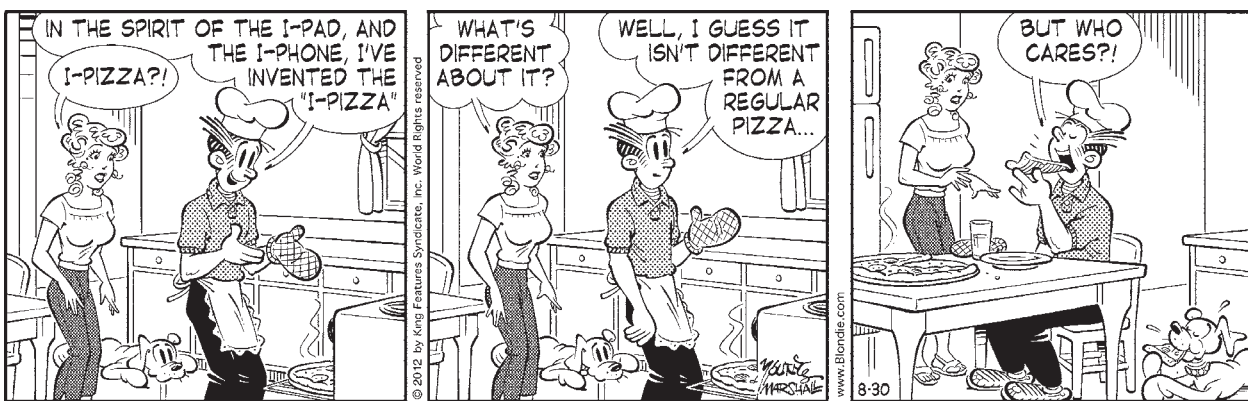
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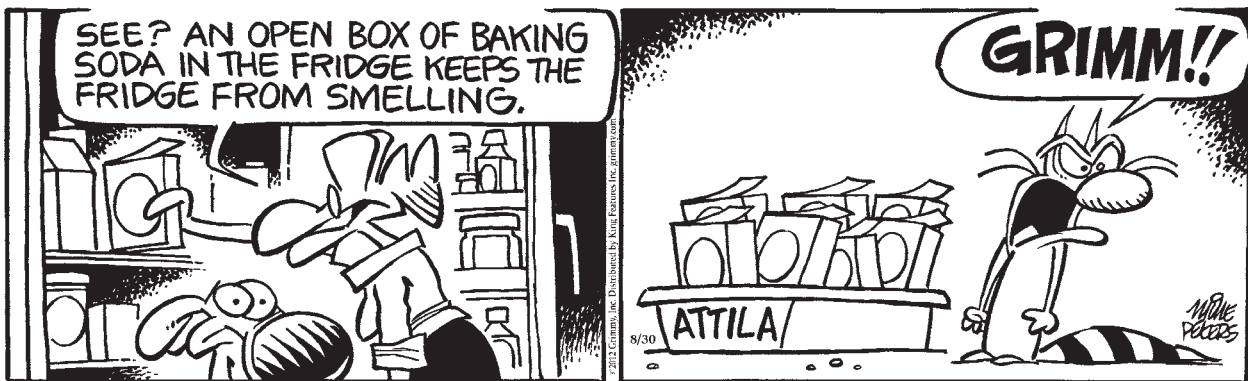
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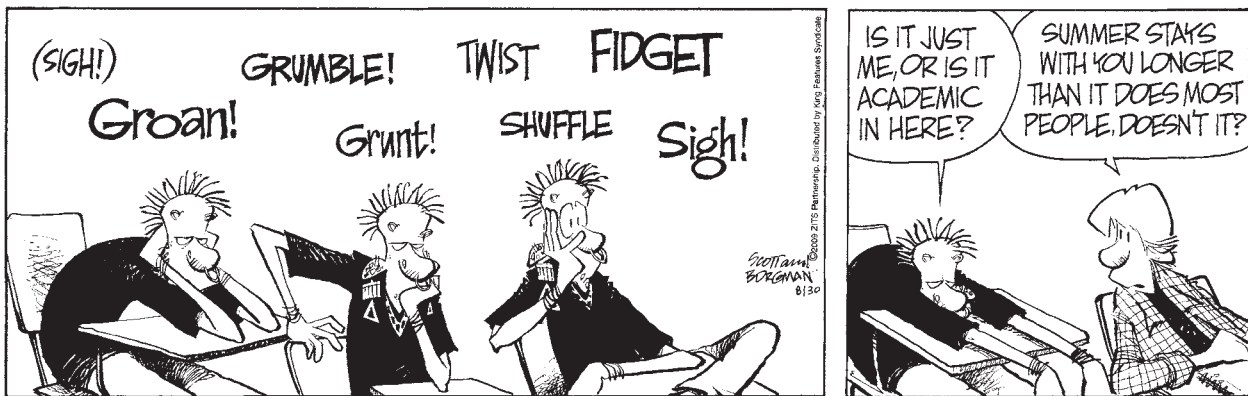
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

2	6				5		9	7
1		7	4			6		3
	4			1		8		
		8		9			1	
3		5			8	2		4
8	1		5				6	9

Difficulty Level ★★

8/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

7	3	4	5	2	6	1	8	9
8	1	6	7	9	3	4	2	5
2	5	9	4	1	8	6	3	7
1	4	2	6	3	9	7	5	8
5	9	8	2	7	4	3	6	1
6	7	3	1	8	5	2	9	4
9	8	7	3	4	2	5	1	6
3	6	1	8	5	7	9	4	2
4	2	5	9	6	1	8	7	3

ACROSS

- 1 "Remember the ___!"
- 6 Joel Chandler Harris' "___ Rabbit"
- 10 Lean-to
- 14 ___ boom; noise caused by a very fast jet
- 15 Actor Rob ___
- 16 ___ off; left suddenly
- 17 Worship
- 18 Sitcom for Sherman Hemsley
- 19 Grows gray
- 20 Punish
- 22 Lay into
- 24 No longer here
- 25 Quantities
- 26 Spain's dollar before the euro
- 29 Incompetent
- 30 Vaudevilian ___ Olsen
- 31 Bite between meals
- 33 Mysterious
- 37 Tulsa's state: abbr.
- 39 Post or Procter
- 41 Auctioneer's cry
- 42 Highways
- 44 Dismal
- 46 Actress Larter
- 47 British chum
- 49 William Randolph ___
- 51 Studious pupil
- 54 Shape; mold
- 55 ___ No. 5; classic perfume
- 56 Covered wagon passengers
- 60 Indian princess
- 61 Ms. Fitzgerald
- 63 Arm joint
- 64 Invites
- 65 Orderly
- 66 Tripoli's nation
- 67 Fit snugly together
- 68 Sunbathes
- 69 Impudent

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14						15				16		
17						18				19		
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37			38		39			40		41		
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47					48			49	50			
51	52	53						54				
55						56				57	58	59
60					61	62			63			
64						65				66		
67						68				69		

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

8/30/12

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

W	O	E			P	L	O	D	S		A	P	E	S
H	U	T	S		R	O	B	I	N		C	L	A	P
O	R	C	A		A	R	O	M	A		C	O	V	E
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			C	A	N	S			C	B	S			
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C	A	L	M		P	A	C	E	D		C	L	O	D
U	S	A		A	L	I	E	N		P	O	E	T	S
S	H	Y	S	T	E	R	S		B	A	R	N	E	Y
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8/30/12

- 36 Correct a text
- 38 Warn
- 40 Email provider for millions
- 43 Mall event
- 45 Pieces of corn
- 48 Natural ability
- 50 Aviator Earhart
- 51 "Beat it!"
- 52 Run after
- 53 Actor Tom ___
- 54 Italian autos
- 56 Arrange beforehand
- 57 Recedes
- 58 Rogers & Clark
- 59 Influence
- 62 Grassy area

Hard to grin while bearing Medicaid dental cuts

ABBY GOODNOUGH
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BOSTON – Banned from cutting enrollment in Medicaid in recent years, many states have instead slashed optional benefits for millions of poor adults in the program. Teeth have suffered disproportionately. Republican- and Democratic-controlled states alike have reduced or largely eliminated dental coverage for adults on Medicaid, the shared state and federal health insurance program for poor people. The situation is not likely to improve under President Barack Obama's health care overhaul: It requires dental coverage for children only.

Illinois became the latest state to drastically cut dental benefits last month, when Gov. Pat Quinn, a Democrat, cut \$1.6 billion out of its \$15 billion Medicaid budget, reducing adult dental coverage to emergency tooth extractions. The state, whose Medicaid program was considered among the most generous, also cut vision benefits, eliminated chiropractic and podiatry coverage and started requiring co-payments for drugs. In about half the states, Medicaid now covers dental care only for pain relief and emergencies, according to a recent report by the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured, a national health research group. Other states cover preventive exams and cleanings but not restorative services, like fillings and root canals.

The federal health care law generally prohibits states from tightening eligibility for Medicaid before 2014, when a vast expansion of the program to cover people with incomes up to 133 percent of the federal poverty line is supposed to take effect. But states are still allowed to cut optional benefits, like vision, dental and drug coverage. Whether to seek broader cuts is part of a contentious debate between Obama and Mitt Romney over the future of Medicaid and Medicare, the government

health care program for older Americans. The dental benefits issue came to the forefront recently here in Massachusetts, a state known for generous Medicaid benefits. Under budgetary pressures, the state



Dr. Andres Guirola, right, extracts a tooth from Richard Lewis, of Revere, Mass., at the Lynn Community Health Center's dental clinic in Lynn, Mass., Aug. 23, 2012. Barred from cutting enrollment in Medicaid in recent years, many states have instead slashed optional benefits for millions like reducing or eliminating dental coverage for adults. Cynthia Baez, left, a dental assistant, looks at records.

(Gretchen Ertl/The New York Times)

stopped paying private Medicaid providers for fillings, root canals, crowns and dentures in July 2010. But it recently decided to restore part of that coverage. Starting in January, Massachusetts Medicaid will pay for fillings – but only for those in the front of the mouth. The reasoning was that healthy front teeth were more important for getting and keeping jobs. “A lot of folks are out of work,” said Courtney Chello, coordinator of an oral health task force at Health Care For All, an advocacy group in Boston. “If you have a gap in the front of your mouth because you had a tooth extracted, it's much more difficult to get a job.”

Dr. Michael Wasserman, the president-elect of the Massachusetts Dental Society, said that he was disappointed Massachusetts did not restore full coverage but that even a partial restoration was extraordinary in these fiscal times. Medicaid patients make up about 20 percent of his practice in Pittsfield, he said.

“Of course we would have also liked to see the back teeth covered,” he said. “It's nice to smile; it's nice to chew. But we have to take what we can get at

this point.”

Many adults on Medicaid have turned to community health centers. In Massachusetts, such clinics received 22,000 new dental patients statewide – 760 per site, on average

– in the first six months after coverage was dropped.

At the Lynn Community Health Center outside Boston, demand has not stopped growing. The center added six dental chairs this year, bringing the total to 12, and hired more hygienists and dentists. Still, “the waiting room is packed,” said Lori Abrams Berry, the executive director.

Even in states where Medicaid enrollees can still get regular dental care, finding dentists who accept Medicaid can be next to impossible. That is partly because reimbursements, which were low to begin with, have also been cut. Dentists, many of whom do not take even private insurance, can get much higher payments from non-Medicaid customers. □

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SUE MANNING

Associated Press

Paw preference won't make a dog or cat walk, talk or wink like a human. You won't even get a high five or a fist pump out of it, said Dr. Nick Dodman, director of the Animal Behavior Clinic in the Department of Clinical Sciences at Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University in Massachusetts.

There's the curiosity factor though, he said. "Wow, I thought that was something unique to people, and how weird to think the dog could be" left- or right-pawed.

Vets and owners agree that pets, including horses, have right and left preferences. Researchers are studying things like right brain-left brain connections, genetics and sexual orientation that may one day change the way dogs and cats are bred, raised, trained and used, said Dr. Stefanie Schwartz of the Veterinary Neurology Center in Tustin, Calif., and a member of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists. Some horses have to be ambidextrous, said Dr. Sharon Crowell-Davis, a behavior and anatomy professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Georgia.



In this Tuesday, Aug. 21, 2012 photo, a Chihuahua shows frustration after the staff at the Los Angeles County Animal Care Control Carson Shelter placed a treat under a bowl to determine paw preference in Gardena, Calif. Results depend on which paw the dog uses to move the bowl.

Associated Press

A 1991 study at Ataturk University in Turkey showed 50 percent of cats were right-pawed, 40 percent were left-pawed and 10 percent were ambidextrous. That study might be out-of-date, Schwartz said, but it does provide percentages.

A 2006 study from the University of Manchester in England showed dogs were split half-and-half.

About 90 percent of humans are right-handed and 10 percent are left-handed. Laterality — the textbook term meaning one side of

the brain is dominant over the other — may someday help breeders predict which puppies will make the best military, service and therapy dogs, Schwartz said, and that could be life-saving. But for now, here are a few simple tests you can do to determine your pet's preference, she said. Doing it 100 times (over several days) should give you an answer, she said.

— If you teach a dog to shake, which paw does it offer you first and most often?

— Fill a toy with something delicious and put it in the center of the dog's visual field. Which paw does it use to touch the toy first? Which paw does the dog use to hold the toy?

— Put something sticky on a dog or cat's nose. Which paw does the animal use to remove it?

— Place a treat or a piece of cheese under a sofa, just beyond a dog or cat's reach. Which paw does it use to try and get it out?

— Dangle a toy over a cat's head. Which paw does it lift

to bat it?

— Put a treat under a bowl. Which paw does the cat or dog use to move it?

— When a dog wants in the backdoor, which paw does it “knock” with?

Schwartz said there are a few things that might alter test results:

— If a dog has arthritis or an injury in a shoulder or leg, it could use the other to compensate.

— When a cat really wants something, tests show it uses its dominant paw, but when it's just fooling around, it may use either or both.

— It's possible that handedness in dogs, and maybe cats, will change over time as the animal's motivation changes.

Luckily, the well-being of dogs and cats doesn't depend on preference. The same cannot be said for horses, Crowell-Davis said.

In U.S. racing, horses only have to lean left because all races are run counterclockwise on tracks, but in some competitions and in some other countries, hors-

es have to race and canter both ways. "They have to be able to circle right and left. If not, they can trip," Crowell-Davis said.

"You have to work to get them to take the lead they prefer less," she said.

Crowell-Davis has never seen an advertisement promoting right- or left-pawed dogs or cats. "The only time you see it used in advertising is with horses. If a horse is being offered for sale, because of issues on the lead, it may say 'Works well on both leads' to emphasize the horse has had training." Robin A.F. Olson of Newtown, Conn., founder and president of Kitten Associates Inc., a rescue organization, said her cats are always reaching for toys or treats with one paw or another.

Olson said she was born left-handed, but her mother didn't want her growing up left-handed in a world of right-handed people. "She always handed things to me close to my right hand. She always put the crayons in my right hand."

There won't be any such lessons for her cats, she said. "I try not to be judgmental of my cats' abilities or lack thereof."

We will never worry about the anti-paw."

It appears that Nora, an internationally acclaimed 8-year-old piano-playing tabby from Philadelphia, owned by piano teacher Betsy Alexander and her artist-photographer husband, Burnell Yow, is right-pawed.

Yow studied her videos and “determined that she appears to lead with her right paw, then follow with her left,” Alexander said.

But she has her ambidextrous, headstrong moments.

"She uses both paws to reach for specific notes, even black notes ... and she uses her head to roll a series of multiple notes." □

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FX orders 90 more episodes of 'Anger Management'

LYNN ELBER

AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — FX is ordering 90 more episodes of "Anger Management," Charlie Sheen's TV comeback vehicle after being fired from "Two and a Half Men."

The unusually large order reflects the original agreement that FX made for the sitcom that stars Sheen as a therapist.

As part of the deal, FX set a ratings target for eight of the first 10 episodes of "Anger Management."

The show reached the threshold, earning an automatic 90-episode order, the channel said. The round figure of 100 episodes is the benchmark for series syndication, and that's the future for episodes that have shown first on FX, said producer Debmart Mercury, a Lionsgate subsidiary.

"Anger Management" will go into syndication in September 2014, the company said Wednesday. It's a model that Debmart Mercury used



This June 26, 2012 file photo shows actor Charlie Sheen attending the FX Summer Comedies Party at Lure in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

with the Ice Cube sitcom "Are We There Yet?" and on "Tyler Perry's House of Payne" and "Meet the Browns."

FX Networks executive vice president Chuck Saffler said he's confident the producers and cast will be able to produce the full order during the next two years after quickly turning out the first 10.

In July, Sheen said the prospect of continuing is

as "exciting as hell," and added, "I don't think 90's gonna be enough."

FX called "Anger Management" cable's highest-rated new comedy series this year, averaging 4.5 million total viewers. The number reflects the show's initial strong showing after its June debut, when it attracted more than 5.5 million viewers. The show's viewership dropped to below 3 million for some later episodes and was hard-hit by the Olympics in August, averaging just under 2 million, according to Nielsen Co.

But "Anger Management" remained a

healthy performer among advertiser-coveted young adult viewers, which was key to FX's decision to place the big-ticket order.

Sheen, who was replaced by Ashton Kutcher on CBS' top-rated comedy, was fired in 2011 by studio Warner Bros. Television because of his erratic personal life and public ridicule of the show's producer.

With "Anger Management," Sheen answers in part to himself with what FX has called a "significant ownership stake" in the show. Bruce Helford is the executive producer. □

Yahoo fires bureau chief for Romney/blacks remark

DAVID BAUDER

AP Television Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Yahoo News fired its Washington bureau chief on Wednesday, less than 24 hours after he was caught on an open microphone saying that Mitt Romney and his wife, at the Republican convention in Florida while a hurricane was approaching Louisiana, were "happy to have a party with black people drowning."

Company spokeswoman Anne Espiritu said Wednesday that David Chalian's remark was inappropriate

and does not represent Yahoo's views.

"We have already reached out to the Romney campaign, and we apologize to Mitt Romney, his staff, their supporters and anyone who was offended," she said. Chalian made the remark during a hot-mic moment before Yahoo began its live coverage of the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Fla., on Tuesday evening. Yahoo is streaming coverage in association with ABC News.

The website Newsbusters posted a copy of the video and the audio. The video showed Ann and Mitt Romney, a former Massachu-



This Tuesday, Aug. 28, 2012 photo released by ABC News shows Yahoo News' Washington bureau chief David Chalian at the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Fla.

Associated Press

setts governor, while the audio picked up background conversation, not all of it intelligible, about the Republican convention taking place as Hurricane Isaac was about to hit the Louisiana coast.

Someone makes a remark, "they're not concerned at all." In a clearer voice, Chalian says, "they are happy to have a party with black people drowning." Chalian said Wednesday that he was "profoundly sorry for making an inappropriate and thoughtless joke."

"I was commenting on the challenge of staging a convention during a hurricane

and about campaign optics," he said. "I have apologized to the Romney campaign, and I want to take this opportunity to publicly apologize to governor and Mrs. Romney."

Rescuers in boats and trucks plucked a handful of people who became stranded by floodwaters in thinly populated areas of southeast Louisiana during the storm. But only one death had been reported as the hurricane plodded across the state, that of a man who authorities said had gone to help friends move a vehicle from under a tree and fell after climbing 18 feet up it. □

Restoration completed on historic Motown piano

JEFF KAROUB

MIKE HOUSEHOLDER

Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — An 1877 Steinway grand piano used by many Motown greats has been restored, thanks to a little help from its friend, Paul McCartney. The former Beatle told Motown Museum officials following a concert last summer in Detroit that he wanted to assist with the restoration of the piano after learning the historic instrument could no longer be played.

Robin Terry, chair of the museum's Board of Trustees, announced late Wednesday that the restoration had been completed.

Terry says the 9 foot piano will make its debut at a charitable event Sept. 18 at Steinway Hall in New York City, where McCartney and Motown founder Berry Gordy will play it for the first time following its restoration.

The piano then will go back on display at the Motown Museum's famed Studio A. □

Madonna to U.S. fans: Appreciate your freedom

MESFIN FEKADU
AP Music Writer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — As she kicked off the U.S. leg of her "MDNA Tour" in Philadelphia, Madonna said she was happy to party in the USA after touring Europe for three months.

The pop icon told the crowd Tuesday night they should "never forget how lucky you are to live where you live and to have the freedom that you have."

She made the comments after talking about the arrest of three members of the punk-rock female band Pussy Riot. The women were sentenced to two years in prison after performing a "punk prayer" at Moscow's Christ the Savior cathedral in which they called on the Virgin Mary to deliver Russia from its leader, Vladimir Putin.

"In my travels around the world the one thing I truly witnessed is we in America have freedom of speech, freedom of expression," the singer said.

Madonna, who toured most of Europe from June to August, has called for



Singer Madonna performs at the Wells Fargo Center on Tuesday Aug. 28, 2012 in Philadelphia.

Associated Press

the Pussy Riot members to be freed. Paul McCartney and Peter Gabriel also have spoken in the women's favor.

"I don't think that it's a coincidence that I'm in the city where the Declara-

tion of Independence was signed," Madonna said at the Wells Fargo Center to nearly 20,000 fans. "We are in the land of democracy." Russian activists recently sued Madonna for millions of dollars, claiming they

were offended by her support for gay rights during her show in St. Petersburg. A law passed in February makes it illegal to promote homosexuality to minors, and the author of that law has pointed to the presence of children as young as 12 at Madonna's concert on Aug. 9. (Minors also attended Madonna's U.S. show.)

When speaking about Pussy Riot, Madonna said that about 80 gay men were jailed in St. Petersburg because of their sexual orientation. She told the crowd that the arrests were unfair, and they booed in her support.

Then the 53-year-old told the U.S. audience: "Don't get fat and lazy and take that freedom for granted." Madonna kicked off her concert late on Tuesday, apologizing to the crowd, who began to boo before she hit the stage around 10:30 p.m.

"We had many changes to make from Europe to America, and I wanted the show to be perfect for you because my fans deserve it

and quite frankly I deserve it," she said.

She performed for nearly two hours, starting in a skin-tight black ensemble with a gun in hand as she sang the song "Girls Gone Wild" from her latest album "MDNA." She transitioned to "Revolver," as she and her background dancers held guns and bullets appeared on the backdrop. (Madonna posted on her website that she does not condone violence or the use of guns and she's using fake guns in concert as a metaphor for strength.) During the next song — "Gang Bang" — she shot a man and spat what appeared to be liquor in his face, while blood splatters and bloody hands appeared on the screen.

The dark mood escaped as Madonna changed into a red and white marching band get-up, singing "Express Yourself" and "Give Me All Your Luvn'" as a marching band played to the crowd. She sang some of Lady Gaga's "Born This Way," pulling up her skirt to reveal her red shorts. □

Yoko Ono, son launch environmental coalition in NY



Yoko Ono, left, and her son Sean Lennon, right, listen during an interview, following the launch of a coalition of artists opposing hydraulic fracturing on Wednesday, Aug. 29, 2012 in New York. Lennon and Ono have joined the coalition called Artist Against Fracking to lobby Gov. Andrew Cuomo to ban the practice of drilling for gas in New York.

Associated Press

ALEX KATZ

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Yoko

Ono and her son, Sean Lennon, on Wednesday launched a coalition of art-

ists, musicians and filmmakers who oppose hydraulic fracturing — a process where millions of gallons (liters) of chemically treated water are injected into the ground to force the release of natural gas from shale deposits — in New York state.

The formation of the group Artists Against Fracking was announced at a news conference in Manhattan with Ono, Lennon and Mark Ruffalo, who has long been outspoken on the issue. Other celebrities joining the coalition's cause include Lady Gaga, Paul McCartney and Alec Baldwin.

The group's formation comes as New York State Gov. Andrew Cuomo prepares to decide whether to allow shale gas drilling using high-volume hydraulic fracturing — or hydrofracking — after four years of studying its health and

environmental impacts.

Ono and Lennon are calling on the governor to ban drilling in New York, which they said can cause gas wells to leak harmful methane into public water supplies. They said their group has requested a meeting with Cuomo to discuss the issue.

In a letter sent to Cuomo on Monday, Ono and Lennon called fracking "a danger to New Yorkers."

"Inevitably, the process leads to the release of toxic chemicals — many of which are unknown and unreported — into our air and water," they wrote.

The letter added: "It is a direct public health threat to families and communities." Proponents argue that drilling and fracking in the Marcellus Shale formation, which covers large parts of Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio and West Virginia,

promises to deliver relatively cheaper natural gas to close customers in the energy-hungry Northeast and create hundreds of well-paying jobs in an economically depressed region.

Cuomo is expected to allow drilling to begin on a limited basis near the Pennsylvania state line, though Ono said she is confident the governor and fracking supporters will eventually come around.

"Eventually logic will overcome everything," she said. "Logic and love."

The coalition is encouraging the public to pressure lawmakers to take action against fracking.

Beyond that, Ono and Lennon told The Associated Press that their next steps largely depended on Cuomo's actions in the coming weeks.

"It's much better to play it by ear," Ono said. □

The Comeback Skid



PAUL KRUGMAN
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There will be two big stars at the Republican National Convention, and neither of them will be Mitt Romney. One will, of course, be Paul Ryan, Romney's running mate. The other will be Chris Christie, the governor of New Jersey, who will give the keynote address. And while the two men could hardly look or sound more different, they are brothers under the skin.

How so? Both have carefully cultivated public images as tough, fiscally responsible guys willing to make hard choices. And both public images are completely false.

I've written a lot lately deconstructing the Ryan myth, so let me turn today to Christie.

When Christie took office in January 2010, New Jersey — like many other states — was in dire fiscal straits thanks to the effects of a depressed economy. Unlike the federal government, states are required by their constitutions to run more or less balanced budgets every year (although there is room for accounting gimmicks), so like other governors, Christie was forced to engage in belt-tightening.

So far so normal: While Christie has made a lot of noise about his tough budget choices, other governors have done much the same. Nor has he eschewed budget gimmicks: Like earlier New Jersey governors, Christie has closed budget gaps in part by deferring required contributions to state pension funds, which is in effect a form of borrowing against the future, and he has also sought to paper over budget gaps by diverting money from places like the Transportation Trust Fund.

If there is a distinctive feature to New Jersey's belt-tightening under Christie, it is its curiously selective nature. The governor was willing to cancel the desperately needed project to build another rail tunnel linking the state to Manhattan, but has invested state funds in a megamall in the Meadowlands and a casino in Atlantic City.

Also, while much of his program involves spending cuts, he has effectively raised taxes on low-income workers and homeowners by slashing tax credits. But he vetoed a temporary surcharge on millionaires while refusing to raise

the state's gasoline tax, which is the third-lowest in America and far below tax rates in neighboring states. Only some people, it seems, are expected to make sacrifices.

But as I said, Christie talks a good (and very loud) game about his willingness to make tough choices, making big claims about spending cuts — claims, by the way, that PolitiFact has unequivocally declared false. And for the past year he has been touting what he claims is the result of those tough choices: the "Jersey comeback," the supposed recovery of his state's economy.

Strange to say, however, Christie has told reporters that he won't use the term "Jersey comeback" in his keynote address. And it's not hard to see why: the comeback, such as it was, has hit the skids. Indeed, the latest figures show his state with the fourth-highest unemployment rate in the nation. Strikingly, New Jersey's 9.8 percent unemployment rate is now significantly higher than the unemployment rate in long-suffering Michigan, which has had a true comeback thanks to the GOP-opposed auto bailout.

Now, state governors don't actually have much impact on short-run economic performance, so the skidding New Jersey economy isn't really Christie's fault. Still, he was the one who chose to make it an issue. And even more important, he's still pushing the policies the state's recovery was supposed to justify.

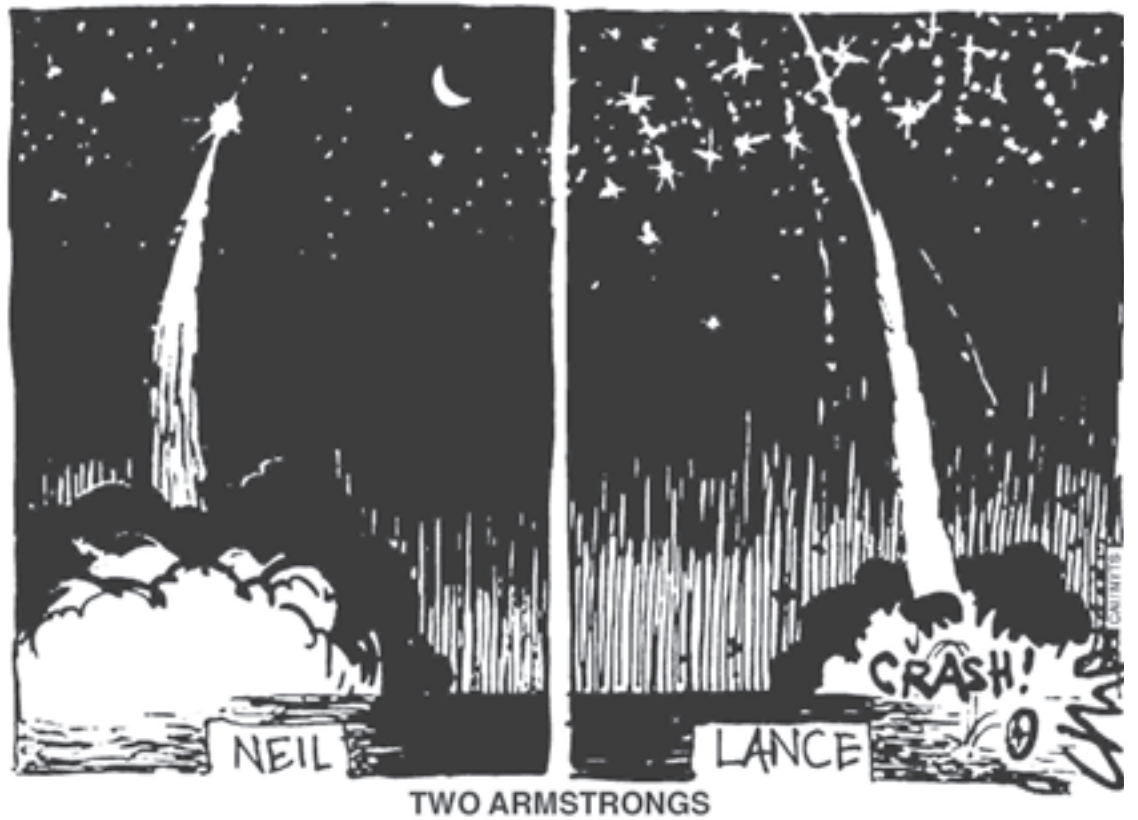
You see, all that boasting about the Jersey comeback wasn't just big talk (although it was that, too). It was, instead, supposed to demonstrate that good times were back, revenue was on the upswing, and it was now time for what Christie really wants: a major cut in income taxes.

Even if the comeback were real, this would be a highly dubious idea. By all accounts, New Jersey still has a significant structural deficit, that is, a deficit that will persist even when the economy recovers. Furthermore, the Christie tax-cut proposal would do very little for the middle class but give large breaks to the wealthy.

But in any case, the good times are by no means back, and neither is the revenue boom that was supposed to justify a tax cut. So has the very responsible Christie accepted the idea of at least delaying his tax-cut plan until the promised revenue gains materialize? Of course not.

Which brings me back to the comparison with Paul Ryan. Ryan, as people finally seem to be realizing, is at heart a fiscal fraud, boasting about his commitment to deficit reduction but actually placing a much higher priority on tax cuts for the wealthy. Christie may have a different personal style, but he's playing the same game.

In other words, meet the new boaster, same as the old boaster. And pray that we won't get fooled again. □



The Real Romney



DAVID BROOKS
© 2012 New York Times

The purpose of the Republican convention is to introduce America to the real Mitt Romney. Fortunately, I have spent hours researching this subject. I can provide you with the definitive biography and a unique look into the Byronic soul of the Republican nominee:

Mitt Romney was born on March 12, 1947, in Ohio, Florida, Michigan, Virginia and several other swing states. He emerged, hair first, believing in America, and especially its national parks. He was given the name Mitt, after the Roman god of mutual funds, and launched into the world with the lofty expectation that he would someday become the Arrow shirt man.

Romney was a precocious and gifted child. He uttered his first words ("I like to fire people") at age 14 months, made his first gaffe at 15 months and purchased his first nursery school at 24 months. The school, highly leveraged, went under, but Romney made 24 million Jujubes on the deal.

Mitt grew up in a modest family. His father had an auto body shop called the American Motors Corp., and his mother owned a small piece of land, Brazil. He had

several boyhood friends, many of whom owned NASCAR franchises, and excelled at school, where his fourth-grade project, "Inspiring Actuaries I Have Known," was widely admired.

The Romneys had a special family tradition. The most cherished member got to spend road trips on the roof of the car. Mitt spent many happy hours up there, applying face lotion to combat windburn.

The teenage years were more turbulent. He was sent to a private school, where he was saddened to find there are people in America who summer where they winter. He developed a lifelong concern for the second homeless, and organized bake sales with proceeds going to the moderately rich.

Some people say he retreated into himself during these years. He had a pet rock, which ran away from home because it was starved of affection. He bought a mood ring, but it remained permanently transparent. His ability to turn wine into water detracted from his popularity at parties.

There was, frankly, a period of wandering. After hearing Lou Reed's "Walk on the Wild Side," Romney decided to leave Mormonism and become Amish. He left the Amish faith because of its ban on hair product, and bounced around before settling back in college. There, he majored in music, rendering Mozart's entire oeuvre in PowerPoint.

His love affair with Ann Davies, the most impressive part of his life, restored his equilibrium. Always respectful, Mitt and Ann decided to elope with their parents. They went on a trip to Israel, where they tried and failed to introduce the concept of reficence. Romney also went on a mission to France. He spent two years knocking on doors, failing to win a single con-

vert. This was a feat he would replicate during his 2008 presidential bid.

After his mission, he attended Harvard, studying business, law, classics and philosophy, though intellectually his first love was always tax avoidance. After Harvard, he took his jawline to Bain Consulting, a firm with very smart people with excessive personal hygiene. While at Bain, he helped rescue many outstanding companies, like Pan Am, Eastern Airlines, Atari and DeLorean.

Romney was extremely detail oriented in his business life. He once canceled a corporate retreat at which Abba had been hired to play, saying he found the band's music "too angry."

Romney is also a passionately devoted family man. After streamlining his wife's pregnancies down to six months each, Mitt helped Ann raise five perfect sons — Bip, Chip, Rip, Skip and Dip — who married identically tanned wives. Some have said that Romney's lifestyle is overly privileged, pointing to the fact that he has an elevator for his cars in the garage of his San Diego home. This is not entirely fair. Romney owns many homes without garage elevators and the cars have to take the stairs.

After a successful stint at Bain, Romney was lured away to run the Winter Olympics, the second most Caucasian institution on earth, after the GOP. He then decided to run for governor of Massachusetts. His campaign slogan, "Vote Romney: More Impressive Than You'll Ever Be," was not a hit, but Romney won the race anyway on an environmental platform, promising to make the state safe for steeplechase.

After his governorship, Romney suffered through a midlife crisis, during which he became a social conservative. This prepared the way for his presidential run. □

New inquiry being made into energy drink firms

NELSON D. SCHWARTZ

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NEW YORK – The New York attorney general has subpoenaed three large makers of so-called energy drinks as part of an investigation into whether the companies are misleading consumers about how much caffeine the drinks contain and the health risks they could pose. The attorney general, Eric T. Schneiderman, is also look-

ing at whether the companies – Monster Beverage, PepsiCo and Living Essentials – violated federal law



in promoting the drinks as dietary supplements rather than as foods, which are regulated more strictly.

A 5-Hour Energy drink display at a 7-11 convenience store in College Park, Md. The New York attorney general has subpoenaed three large makers of so-called energy drinks as part of an investigation into whether the companies are misleading consumers about how much caffeine the drinks contain and the health risks they could pose. (Steve Ruark/The New York Times)

State authorities are also concerned about whether all of the ingredients that go into the beverages are properly disclosed, according to an official briefed on the investigation who spoke on the condition of anonymity. Investigators are also examining whether some additives, like black tea extract and guarana, may contain additional caffeine that is not reflected when the drinks

are labeled.

The subpoenas were issued in July, and the official said more companies could face requests for information as the investigation progresses.

Besides Monster's drink, the beverages under scrutiny are AMP from Pepsi and 5-hour Energy drink from Living Essentials.

Living Essentials reported a state attorney general inquiry was under way last month during a bond offering, but a spokeswoman declined to comment further Tuesday. Spokesmen for Monster and Pepsi also declined to discuss the subpoenas.

In a statement, the American Beverage Association said it could not comment on the details of Schneiderman's investigation. The trade association statement noted that ingredients and labeling for energy drinks were regulated by the Food and Drug Administration and that caffeine levels from additives were fully disclosed. It also said that the industry had voluntarily restricted marketing to children and the sale of energy drinks in schools. In 2010, the FDA issued warning letters to four companies that made energy drinks combining alcohol and caffeine – Charge Beverages, New Century Brewing, Phusion Projects and United Brands – citing a health risk. Despite concerns by public health experts, the FDA has not taken on makers of more traditional energy drinks, which are carbonated and provide a quick, caffeine-fueled boost.

Energy drinks have surged in popularity in recent years, especially among high school and college students. They have been a source of growth for beverage companies even as demand for more traditional drinks like soda has cooled. Coca-Cola considered a buyout of Monster earlier this year, but with a market capitalization of more than \$10 billion, a deal for Monster would have been expensive, and Coke ultimately passed. □

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